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in all Probability, was occasion'd by a violent Fright; God, in his good Providence, might permit this Distemper to befall him at this Juncture, in order to facilitate his Escape out of the Hands of *Achish*, and, as soon as the Danger was over, restor'd him to his former Health again. For this Reason we find him, in those Psalms, which he is thought to have compos'd upon this Occasion, alluding both to the Nature of his Distemper, and to God's Goodness, in preserving him in it, and delivering him from it: (u) *Great are the Troubles of the Righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of all: He keepeth all his Bones, so that not one of them is broken; and therefore (x) unto thee, O God, will I pay my Vows, unto thee will I give Thanks; for thou hast delivered my Soul from Death, and my Feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the Light of the Living.*

David's receiving those that flock'd to him justify'd.

*DAVID*, upon his Escape from the Court of *Achish*, not knowing of any other Place of Retreat, betook himself to the Cave of *Adullam*, where he found it necessary to provide for his Security, by putting himself upon some Foot of Defence. *Jonathan*, from full Conviction, had told him, (as himself, from frequent Experience, had found), that his Father, at all Adventures, would endeavour to take away his Life. His Family, by this Time, were fallen under the Displeasure of *Saul*, and were in Danger of being all cut off (as lately were the Priests of *Nob*) under Pretence of a Conspiracy against him; and therefore it is no Wonder, that his Brethren, having this Apprehension of Danger

before their Eyes, resorted to him for their own Security; no Wonder, that, in \* Times of national Discord, Refugees of all Kinds, either through their private Wants, or the Oppression of their Enemies, a Disaffection to the Government, or a Zeal for the next Successor, should flock to *David*: Nor was *David* any ways blameable for receiving them, (y) since we have abundant Reason to presume, that he took none under his Protection, but such as were forc'd to flee from *Saul's* Injustice and Oppression, nor screen'd any Debtors, but such as were under a real Inability to satisfy their Creditors, and were therefore necessitated, either to leave their Country, or lose their Liberty. The Submission and Discipline, wherein he kept his People, and the high Notions of Respect and Reverence, which he always infus'd into them for the Government, and Person of the King, are an ample Testimony, that he meditated no Defection or Revolt; and the Debtors, whom he secur'd from cruel Prosecutions, or Slavery, he put in a Condition to pay their Creditors, by leading them against the Enemies of *Israel*, from whom, in several Expeditions, they return'd laden with rich Spoils.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

THERE is one Part, however, of *David's* Conduct, that cannot so well be vindicated; and that is, what pass'd between him and *Achish*, upon his second Retreat to his Court. We may suppose indeed, that, during this Interval, an Alliance was made between *Achish* and him, (tho' the sacred Historian makes no mention of it) and that this new *Ally*, hearing how violently *Saul* persecuted him, might,

His Conduct in some Instances blam'd.

(u) Psal. xxxiv. 17.

(x) Ibid. lvi. 12, 13.

\* Though there be no Comparison between the Proceedings of a very righteous, and a very wicked Man, *David* and *Catiline*, yet it may not be amiss, upon this Occasion, to take Notice of what *Sallust* says of *Manlius*, *Catiline's* Agent and Ambassador. *Manlius in Etruria plebem sollicitare, egestate, simul ac dolore injurie, novarum rerum cupidam, quod Sulle dominatione agros, bonaque omnia amiserat; preterea latrones ejusque generis, quorum in ea regione magna copia fuit, &c.* 'Tis not improbable however, that the Usage now prevail'd among the *Jews*, which *Caesar* tells us, anciently obtain'd among the *Gauls*, for those, that were in Debt, oppress'd by Tributes, or the Tyranny of the Great, to betake themselves to the Service of some eminent Man for Protection: By him they were maintain'd, and to him they devoted themselves, under a solemn Obligation to live and die with him. These were called, in the *Gallie* Language, *Soldarii*, from whence the Word *Soldier* is deriv'd; and, as they might be honest and good Men, tho' they had the Misfortune to be in Debt, or could not submit to tyrannical Treatment; so, in all Probability, *David's* Companions were. Vid. *The Life of David, by the Author of Revelation examin'd.*

(y) *Calmet's* Comment. in 1 Sam. xxii. 2.



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might, in Hopes of making the Breach wider, and of exasperating *David* against him, voluntarily invite him into his Dominions; but certainly we cannot but say, that *David* should by no Means have gone. God had expressly commanded him by his Prophet to return into the Tribe of *Judah*, and, at the same Time, gave him Assurance, that he would be his Safeguard and Protector: It was therefore an apparent Diffidence of God's Providence, which had been so long employ'd in his Preservation, to make an Enemy's Country the Place of his Refuge; and a Breach it was of Truth and Fidelity to his new Ally, to make him believe, that he was fighting against his *Foes*, when all the while he was destroying his *Confederates*.

BUT what can we say for his Conduct, when he joins Forces with the Enemies of his Country, takes the Field with them, promises to act *offensively*, and looks upon it as a Kind of Slight and Indignity to be dismiss'd? (a) *What have I done*, says he to *Achish*, *that I may not go fight against the Enemies of my Lord the King*? One would really suspect, by his asking the Question, that he had an Intention not unlike that of the famous *Martius Coriolanus*, who, to revenge himself of the Ingratitude of his Country, join'd with the *Volsi* to destroy it. But if his Intention was either to stand *neuter*, or to turn against the *Philistines* in the Day of Battle, his Perfidy and Ingratitude to *Achish* must be open and conspicuous.

IN short, how well soever we may wish to *David's* Character, there is no vindicating his Conduct in this Particular. Which Party soever he had taken, he must have been culpable; and one Party he must have taken, had not Providence so timely interpos'd to preserve his Honour without injuring his Conscience. However, if we would suppose any Thing in Extenuation of his Fault, we must represent to ourselves a *Fugitive*, pursu'd by a formidable Enemy, and, every Moment, in Danger of falling into his Hands; this

Fugitive kindly receiv'd at a *foreign* Court, and protected by a Prince, that was in Hostility with his Persecutor; this Prince expecting of his Refugee, in Consideration of the Favours, he had conferr'd on him, that he should attend him to the War, and espouse his Cause against their common Enemy; and, all this while, the other, bound in Gratitude not to be *uncivil*, and, considering the dangerous Situation of his own Affairs, not daring to discover his real Purposes: If we imagine this, I say, we must allow, that, if in any Case, what they call a *Finesse* in Policy were allowable, it was in this of *David's*, when he had unhappily brought himself into these Circumstances.

IT may seem a little strange perhaps, that *David*, who, in these, and several other grosser Instances, could not but be culpable in the Eyes of God, should, nevertheless, be stil'd in Scripture (b) *the Man after his own Heart*: But, whoever observes the Occasion of that Expression, will find, that it ought to be taken in a comparative Sense only, and in Derogation indeed to *Saul*, whose Transgression, in sparing *Amalek*, the Prophet *Samuel* was then reproving; that, in executing his Decrees upon the idolatrous Nations round about him, *David* would be more punctual, and not so remiss as *Saul* had been; and, in this Respect, would conform to the Divine Will, or be *the Man after God's own Heart*. This seems to be the primary Sense of the Words, tho' the common *Solution*, viz. that, tho' *David* was a great and grievous Sinner, yet the Severity of his Repentance clear'd him in the Sight of God, and made an Amends for the Enormity of his Transgressions, be not much amiss.

IT cannot however with Justice be said, that *David* was any ways culpable in sparing the Life of *Saul*, even when Providence seems to have put it in his Hand. This Trial God made of his Virtue and Clemency, and a glorious Conquest it was, not only to overcome his

From 1 Sam.  
i. to the End.

And yet in  
what Sense he  
was a Man  
after God's  
own Heart.

His saving  
Saul's Life  
justify'd.

(a) 1 Sam. xxix. 8.

(b) Ibid. xiii. 14. and xv. 24.



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own Resentments, which were justly enough founded against *Saul*, but the Arguments and Instigations likewise of those about him; (b) *Behold the Day, of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold I will deliver thine Enemy into thine Hand, that thou mayest do to him, as it shall seem good unto thee.* God had deliver'd him into his Hand indeed, but had given him no Order, or Permission to slay *Saul*. (c) He had promis'd him the Kingdom likewise, but would, by no means, allow him to ascend the Throne by Blood. His Title to the Succession was real, and incontestable, but not allow'd to be put in Force, or himself to attempt, by Ways of Violence, the Possession of the Crown, as long as *Saul* was permitted by God to reign, and recogniz'd, as *Sovereign*, by the People. *David* as yet, being only a private Man, had no Authority to wage War against *Saul*; and, tho' it be allowable for any one to defend himself against an unjust Aggressor, and to repel Force by Force, yet this must be done only in order to secure his own Life, and not to take away that of his Adversary; for what the Apostles say of *judging*, or *censuring*, is much more forcible in the Matter of *killing*: (d) *Who art thou that judgest another Man's Servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth; for there is one Lawgiver, who is able to save, and to destroy: Who art thou then that judgest another?* And these Rules, which ought to be observ'd by private Persons, are much more extensive, when they relate to a Prince and his Subject. The Subject is oblig'd in Duty, even tho' he be innocent, to bear patiently the ill Treatment of his Prince. *David*, no Doubt, was conscious of his own Integrity, but, were it not for the preceding Promises of God in his Favour, and the Orders, which, from Time to Time, he receiv'd from the High-Priest's Oracle, it would not be so easy a Matter to justify some Part of his Conduct. His fleeing from

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his Country, inlisting Men, and putting himself in a Condition of Defence, would, even under our mild Government, be look'd upon as *feditious* and *rebellious* Proceedings: And there we may suppose, that *David* himself might not have so favourable Opinion of the Course of Life, he was compell'd at that Time to follow; might think that he gave some Umbrage to *Saul's* Jealousy, and Suspicion of him; and might thereupon be the more inclinable to excuse the Violence of his Persecution, and to make no other Use of the Advantages, he had against him, than to demonstrate his own Innocence, and the Groundlessness of the other's Suspicions; for such seems to be the Sense of his own Words. (e) *Wherefore doth my Lord thus pursue after his Servant? For, what have I done, or what Evil is in my Hand? Wherefore hearest thou Mens Words, saying, David seeketh thy Hurt? Behold this Day thine Eyes have seen, how the Lord had delivered thee into mine Hand in the Cave, but mine Eye spared thee; therefore cursed be they before the Lord, who make this Difference betwixt us; for they have driven me out this Day from abiding in the Inheritance of the Lord:* For herein, he not only pleads his own Innocence, and good Intentions towards the King, but, in some Measure, excuses the King's Conduct towards him, as being under the Influence of *evil Counsellors*, which both impos'd upon the King's Credulity, and compell'd him to such a Method of Life, as was far from being agreeable to his Interest or Inclination.

UPON many Accounts therefore, it was an Act of his great and generous Soul, for *David* to spare the Life of his severest Enemy: But tho' we cannot, in like Manner, justify his Indignation against *Nabal*, and the Oath which he swore to destroy his whole Family; yet something may be offer'd in excuse of it, if we attend a little to what occasion'd it, and the too common Effect, which such Treatment

From 1 Sam.  
i. to the End.

And his Resentment against Nabal, in some Measure, excus'd.

(b) 1 Sam. xxiv. 4.  
(e) 1 Sam. xxiv. 9, 10.

(c) Calmer's Comment. in 1 Sam. xxiv. 4.

(d) Rom. xiv. 4. and Jam. iv. 12.



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ment (as *Nabal's* was) is apt to have upon such Spirits, as we may suppose *David's* to have been. *David*, while he continu'd in the Wilderness of *Paran*, had given his Men Charge, not only to do no Injury to *Nabal's* Shepherds and Herdsmen, but even to protect and assist them, in case they were invaded by any of the neighbouring *Arabians*; and now, that their Master was shearing his Sheep (which was always a *festival* Season) not far from the Place, where *David* was encamp'd; to shew him the greater Respect, he sent no less than *ten young Men* of his Company, to make his Compliments to him, and, in the most civil Manner, to request something of him, (as it was the Custom to be generous and liberal at such a Time as that) for the Relief of himself and his Followers, in this Form: (f) *Peace be to thee*, (as the young Men's Instructions were) *and Peace be to thine House, and Peace be unto all thou hast*. *Peace*, in the sacred Language, comprehends all Manner of Blessings, both *spiritual* and *temporal*, and therefore an higher Compliment, (as we say) or a more affectionate Salutation, could not have been devis'd. *And now I have heard, that thou hast Shearers; and thy Shepherds, which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while that they were in Carmel*: A sufficient Argument, one would think, to engage *Nabal's* grateful Acknowledgment; because it certainly was a Matter of no small Courtesy, for a Body of Men in Arms, and in Want of the common Necessaries of Life, not to take by Violence what they could not be hinder'd from. Such Men claim a Kind of Licence to do Injuries with Impunity, and therefore it ought to be deem'd a great Favour, when they do them not. *David*, and his Men however, are so far from magnifying their Services to *Nabal*, that they only say, (g) *they did them no Hurt*; whereas his own Servants acknowledge, *that they were a*

Defence, and a Wall to them, both by Night and by Day, all the while, that they were with them keeping Sheep. Upon this Presumption, the Matter of their Request was, *Let the young Men find Favour in thine Eyes; (for we come in a good Day) give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh unto thine Hand unto thy Servants, and thy Son David*. Words can hardly be invented more full of Respect and Humility; (h) for he pays a Deference to *Nabal*, either upon the Account of his Seniority, or Descent from the same Tribe, and desires no Rarities, no *Delicates*, but any Thing that first came to hand, and what he could most conveniently spare.

*NABAL* (as we just now hinted) was of the same Tribe with *David*, and could not therefore be supposed ignorant either of his Exploits, in Defence of his Country, nor of the true Cause of *Saul's* Indignation against him: And yet, observe the Rudeness and Insolence of his Answer to such a Civil Message, and humble Request: (i) *Who is David, and who is the Son of Jesse? There are many Servants, now-a-days, that break every Man from his Master: Shall I take the Provisions I have made for my Shearers, and give them unto Men, whom I know not whence they are?* Nothing certainly could be more provoking than such an Answer as this. The charging *David* with being a *Vagabond*, and Rebel to his Prince, was a Reproach insufferable to a Man of a liberal Spirit, who knew himself innocent: And therefore no Wonder that *David*, upon the Report of the Messengers, who were themselves brought under the same Predicament, and therefore had no Reason to alleviate Matters, was resolved, in his Passion, to be reveng'd upon *Nabal*. For, (k) there were four Things in the Matter before us, that seem to have inflam'd his Resentment, and put him upon this sanguinary Design. 1<sup>st</sup>, The Want, which both he and his Companions at present labour'd under,

but

From 1 Sam.  
i. to the End.

(f) 1 Sam. xxv. 6, &c.  
XAV. 10, 11.

(g) Ibid. ver. 16.  
(h) Le Clerc's Comment. in Locum.

(i) Patrick's and Calmer's Commentaries.

(k) 1 Sam.



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but hop'd to have reliev'd, out of the Abundance of a *wealthy* Man, who might easily have done it without hurting himself. 2dly, The *Deception* he was under, in finding no Compensation made him, for the Care, which he, and his People had taken of *Nabal's* Cattle, tho' perhaps he had given them his Word and Assurance, that something of this Kind would be done. 3dly, The *Resentment*, which easily rises in the Breast of any generous Man, when, instead of Thanks, and a grateful Acknowledgment, he meets with Contumely and opprobrious Language. And 4thly, The *Vexation*, which an innocent Man, conscious of his own Merits, and the Services he had done his King and Country, must necessarily feel, when he perceives himself vilified, and treated as a *Scoundrel*. † *Fugitive* and *Slave* are Imputations of the grossest Nature; and, when retorted by an ungrateful Person upon his Guardian and Benefactor, are Provocations past bearing.

ANY one of these Things singly was enough to irritate a Man of a lofty Spirit; but all put together could hardly fail of inflaming the Mind to such a Degree, as to make him lose the Government of his Passion, and fall into the most vindictive Rage, which is generally more observable in *military* Men, whose Courage and Spirits run high, and, being too much accustomed to Blood and Slaughter, even in lawful Wars, have not that Dread and Abhorrence of cruel and outrageous Executions, as the rest of Mankind have, who live more retired and peaceable Lives.

'T WAS to the sudden Transport of *David's* Passion then, and perhaps *that* exasperated by the Instigations of his own Men, that we are to impute his Vow,

and Design of destroying *Nabal's* Family: And tho' in this we cannot commend him, yet certainly there is something *Praise-worthy* in his speedy Reconciliation, upon *Abigail's* first Address, and Application to him, in the Room of her Husband: (1) *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this Day to meet me; and blessed be thy Advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this Day from coming to shed Blood, and from avenging myself with my own Hand.* †  
“ In a Word, the Resolution against *Nabal* (as one elegantly expresses it) was the Resolution of a *mortal*, not to say a *military* Man, too much injur'd and provoked, and urg'd by Necessity and Self-preservation: The Change and the Thanksgiving, upon being averted from Evil, were the Sentiments of an *Hero*, and a Saint.”

THE *Jews* indeed (as we quoted the Objection from *Josephus*) give us an high Commendation of *Saul*, and seem to prefer him before *David* himself in Regard to the *Magnanimity* of his Death. But it is much to be questioned, whether *Self-murder* (which was certainly *Saul's* Case) be an Act of *Magnanimity*, or not. For, besides that the Laws of all Nations have condemned it, as abhorrent to the Dictates of Nature and Reason, of Self-love and Self-preservation; the wisest of the *Heathen* World ever look'd upon it as an Instance of Madness and Brutality, and, with great Wisdom, have concluded, that such an Action is so far from favouring of true Courage and Generosity, that \* it is the sure Effect of a weak and pusillanimous Temper of Mind; since true *Greatness of Soul* (as they justly argue) consists in supporting the Evils of Adversity, and not in shifting

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

*Saul's killing himself blam'd, as an Act of Cowardice.*

† The Life of King *David*.

(1) 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33.

† The Life of King *David*.

\* Si rationem rectè consulas, non vera animi magnitudo nominatur, ubi quisque, non valendo tolerare vel quæque aspera, vel aliena peccata, seipsum interemerit: Magis enim mens infirma deprehenditur, quæ ferre non potest vel duram sui corporis servitutem, vel stultam vulgi opinionem; majorque animus meritò dicendus, qui vitam ærumnosam magis potest ferre, quam fugere. Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. i. c. 22. And to the same Purpose is that in an Heathen Author:

Rebus in angustia facile est contemnere vitam:  
Fortiter ille facit, qui miser esse potest.

MART. Epig.



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shifting them off, which is a Mark of a poor impatient Spirit, sinking under the common Calamities of Life, and not knowing how to bear the Blows of bad Fortune. (m) *Draw thy Sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest the Uncircumcised come and mock, or abuse me,* \* was the Request, which Saul made to his *Armour-bearer*, and shews that it was not Bravery and Courage, but the Fear of *Insults*, and a conscious *Inability* to bear them with a becoming *Superiority* of Mind, that made him shun the *Storm*, when he saw it approaching, by withdrawing from the Stage of Life.

As a Violation  
of God's Law.

S A U L's Case indeed was very dolorous, but he had not therefore any Authority to destroy himself. His Life was a sacred Depositum of God's, and not to be taken away without invading his Right, and violating his Laws at the same Time. For, whatever some may think of the *Silence* of the Scripture concerning Self-murder, there is no Question to be made, but that it is included in the *sixth Commandment*, under which Saul then lived. (n) The Commandment forbids Murder in general; and 'tis certainly as much Murder, to kill ourselves, as to kill another Man: And the Reason, which the Scripture gives, why we are not allowed to do it, in both Cases, is the same, because (o) *in the Image of God made he Man*. For if I must not shed the Blood of another, because *he is made in the Image of God*; I must not shed the Blood of mine own self, because I also am a Man, and *made in the Image of God*, as well as he. The Reason therefore why we have not more frequent Prohibitions against this Sin is plainly this, — (q) That whatever Sins or Offences God, as a Lawgiver, prohibits, he prohibits with a Penalty, *i. e.* he affixes such a Punishment to such a Crime, and he, who commits the Crime, is to

undergo the Punishment in this World, whether it be Restitution, Loss of Limb, or Loss of Life itself. But now this can never happen in the Case of Self-murder, because Self-murder prevents all Punishment, (the Man being dead, before any Cognizance can be taken of his Offence) and therefore prevents all Laws concerning it; and can, consequently, only be included under general Commands, and forbidden as a Sin, whereof God alone can take Cognizance in the World to come.

From 1 Sam.  
i. to the End.

SINCE upon the whole then, Saul *And whether he was properly sav'd, or no.* may be said to have died in an Act of Cowardice, and in the Violation of God's Law, whereof he had no Space to repent; it has been a Matter of some Enquiry, what we are to think of his Salvation. The Scripture indeed tells us, that (q) *Saul died for his Transgression, which he committed against the Lord, and also for asking Counsel of one who had a familiar Spirit, to enquire of it, and enquired not of the Lord, and therefore the Lord slew him.* But it is doing a manifest Violence to the Sense of these Words, to apply them (as some have done) to his *final* Perdition, when they plainly relate to no more than his *temporal* Death. The dangerous and destructive Nature of *Self-murder* is, that it makes Repentance (the only revealed Condition of Man's Salvation) impossible; but then we are to know, that, in that inexhaustible Fountain of Goodness, there may be some *uncovenanted* Mercy, some *sovereign* and *prerogative* Grace, that may make favourable Allowances for the Distraction of Men's Thoughts, or Passions, the Violence of their Fears, or Troubles, or the over-bearing Weight of any other Temptation.

BUT (to determine this Question more peremptorily) tho' it certainly be consonant to the Mercy and Goodness of God, to

(m) 1 Sam. xxxi. 4.

\* How much nobler was that Resolution of *Darius*, who, finding himself betray'd, and that he was either to be murder'd by his own Subjects, or deliver'd into the Hands of *Alexander*, would not however be his own Executioner. *I had rather, says he, die by another's Guilt, than my own.* CURT. Lib. v. c. 12.

(n) Fleetwood, against Self-murder.

(o) Gen. ix. 6.

(p) Fleetwood, *ibid.*

(q) 1 Chron. x. 13, 14.



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to think, that no Man shall answer for any Miscarriage, which is wholly occasion'd by the Power of a *Disease*, or the Distraction of the *Brain*, because whatever is committed in such a Case, is not the Man's *free Act*, and consequently, cannot be his Guilt; yet we have no Reason to presume, that the Case is not so with those, who, out of Pride, or Haughtiness, Fear of Miseries to come, or Impatience under present Sufferings, distrust of God's Providence, or despair of his Mercy, lay violent Hands upon themselves; because the Act was both voluntary and vicious, and not to be amended by Repentance: But, without limiting thy Goodness, O Lord, unto thy Mercy we commit their Souls!

Heathen Testimonies in Confirmation of some Passages.

THUS we have endeavour'd to satisfy most of the *popular* Objections, which have been rais'd against several Facts, occurring in the first Book of *Samuel*; and, for the farther Confirmation hereof, we shall only instance in one or two ancient *Traditions* among the *Heathens*, which, in all Probability, deriv'd their Original from this Part of sacred History. The *Scythians*, upon their Return out of *Egypt*, passing thro' the Country of the *Philistines*, robb'd the Temple of *Venus* at *Askalon*, and for their Punishment (as (r) *Herodotus* tells us) they, and their Posterity, were, for a long while after, afflicted with Emerods: Whereupon (s) the learned *Prideaux* remarks, that the *Philistines* had till then preserv'd the Memory of what they had formerly suffer'd on Account of the Ark of God. The *Athenians*, when the Mysteries of *Bacchus* were brought out of *Bæotia*, having not receiv'd them with all the Pomp and Solemnity that the God expected, were smitten (t) with a Disease in their *secret*

*Parts*, which resembl'd the Malady of the People of *Ashdod*, and so did their Cure too; for, having consulted the *Oracle*, they were inform'd, that the Way to get rid of their Plague, was to offer unto *Bacchus* golden Figures of the Part, wherein they were afflicted. The *Greeks*, at the taking of *Troy*, discover'd an Ark dedicated to *Bacchus*, and when *Eurypilus* (as *Pausanias* (u) tells us) adventur'd to open it, he found therein the Image of the God, but was immediately depriv'd of his Senses for daring to look into it; which seems to be a plain Transcript from the Irreverence and Fate of the *Bethshemites*. (x) *Clemens Alexandrinus* has observ'd, that the Fable of *Æacus's* praying for Rain in a great Drought, and when *Greece* was sadly distress'd for Want of Corn, was borrow'd from that Part of *Samuel's* History, where he is said to have call'd down Thunder and Rain, in the Time of *Wheat-Harvest*, when the Sky was all serene and clear: And therefore we need less wonder at the Story between *Saul* and the Witch of *Endor*, when we read of *Circe*, *Medea*, *Erichtho*, *Manto*, *Antonoë*, and several other Women, who, in the *Heathen* World, became famous for their *Necromancy*, and of the many *Votaries*, that resorted to them; when we find *Statius* introducing *Tiresias*, as raising Altars, making Libations, and offering Sacrifices, \* with solemn Invocations to the *infernal* Gods; and *Homer* himself spending a great Part of (y) one Book of his Poem, in representing *Ulysses* as invoking the Ghost of this same *Tiresias*, and attending to the Oracles, which proceeded from his Mouth. These Things had their Foundation in some early *Traditions*, which at first arose from the Facts contain'd in the *sacred* Writings,

9 B

(r) Lib. i.  
*Aristoph.* Scholiast. in *Acharn.* Act II.

(s) Connection of the Old and New Testament, Part i. Book 1. page 44.

(u) In *Achaic.* c. 19. pag. 572.

(x) *Stromat.* 6.

(t) Vide

\* The Words of his Invocation are these,

Solvite pulfanti loca muta, & inane severa  
Persephonea, vulgusque cava sub nocte repositum  
Elicite, & plena redent Stygia Portitor alno;  
Forte simul gressum, &c.

(y) *Odyss.* xi.



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Writings, which are confessedly the most  
antient Records we have; and, in this  
Respect, are an Argument of their *Veraci-*

ty, since we find them alluded to, by sub-  
sequent Authors, who had no Regard to  
their Authority.

From 1 Sam.  
i. to the End.

## DISSERTATION III.

Of SAMUEL'S *Appearing to SAUL at the Witch of ENDOR'S.*

An Account of  
the Beginning  
of Necro-  
mancy.

**H**OW long the Profession of *Necro-*  
*mancy*, or the Art of raising up the  
Dead, in order to pry into future Events,  
or to be inform'd of the Fate of the *Liv-*  
*ing*, has obtain'd in the World, we have  
no Indications from History. We perceive  
no Footsteps of it in the Ages before the  
*Flood*, and yet it is strange, that a People,  
abandon'd to all Kind of Wickedness in a  
Manner, could keep themselves clear of  
this: But our Account of these Times is  
very short. The first express Mention that  
we meet with of *Magicians* and *Sorcerers*,  
is almost in the Beginning of the Book of  
*Exodus*, where *Moses* is soliciting the  
Deliverance of the Children of *Israel* out  
of *Egypt*; and therefore *Egypt*, which  
affected to be the Mother of most occult  
Sciences, is suppos'd to have been the  
Inventress of this. From *Egypt* it spread  
itself into the neighbouring Countries, and  
soon infected all the *East*: For, as it

undertook to gratify Man's Inquisitiveness,  
and *superstitious* Curiosity, it could not  
long want Abettors. From *Egypt* 'tis  
certain that the *Israelites* brought along  
with them no small Inclination to these  
detestable Practices, and were but two  
much addicted to them; notwithstanding  
all the Care that the *State* had taken to  
suppress them, and the Provision which  
God had made, by establishing a Method  
of consulting him, to prevent their hanker-  
ing after them.

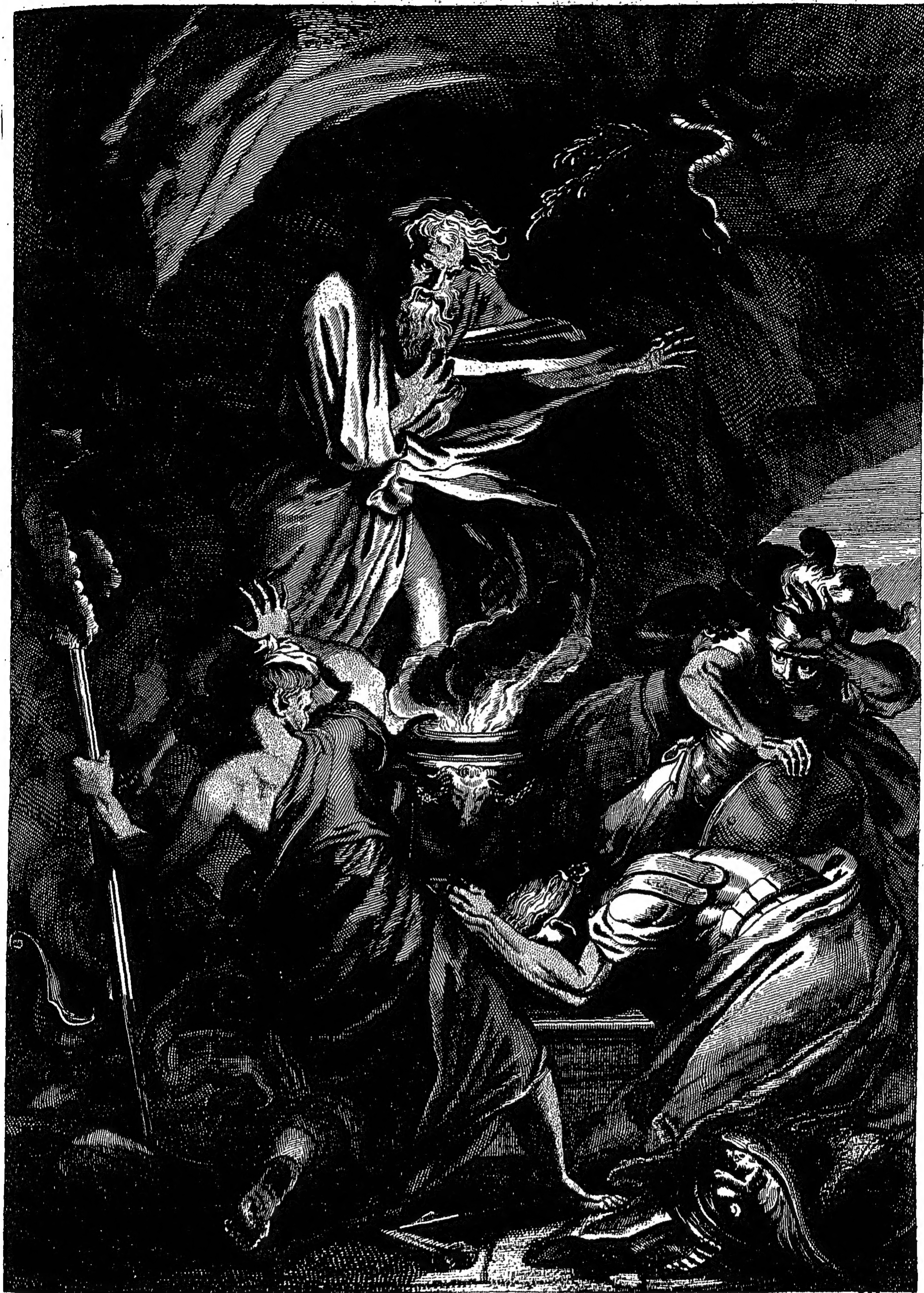
THE Injunction of the Law is very  
express. — (2) *When thou art come into*  
*the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth*  
*thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the*  
*Abominations of those Nations. There*  
*shall not be found among you any, that useth*  
*Divination, or an Observer of Times, or an*  
*Enchanter, or a Witch, or a Charmer, or*  
*a \* Consulter with familiar Spirits, or a*  
*Wizard, or a Necromancer; for all that*  
*do*

The Jewish  
Laws against  
it.

(2) Deut. xviii. 9, &c.

\* What our *English* Translation makes a *familiar Spirit*, the *Septuagint* and *Vulgate* render the *Spirit of Python*, but the *Hebrew* calls it the *Spirit of Ob*. The Word *Ob*, or *Oboth*, in its primary Signification, is a *Bottle*, or *Vessel* of *Leather*, wherein *Liquors* were put; and 'tis not unlikely that this Name was given to *Witches* and *Wizards*, because, when they were in their Fits of *Enthusiasm*, they swelled in their Bellies like a *Bottle*. The Occasion of this Swelling is said by some to proceed from a *Demon's* entering into the *Sorceress per Partes Genitales*, and so ascending to the Bottom of her *Stomach*, from whence, at that Time, she utter'd her Predictions; and for this Reason the *Latins* call such Persons *Ventriloqui*, and the *Greeks* *ἑγγαστρίμοροι*, i. e. *People who speak out of their Bellies*. That there have been such People as these might be shewn by several Examples both in antient and modern History; but, at present, we shall content ourselves with one, taken from *Cælius Rhodiginus*, (Lectio. Antiq. lib. viii. c. 10.) His Words are to this Effect: — “ While I am writing, says he, concerning *ventriloquous* Persons, there is, in my own Country, “ a Woman of a mean Extract, who has an unclean Spirit in her Belly, from whence may be heard a Voice, not very “ strong indeed, but very articulate and intelligible. Multitudes of People have heard this Voice, as well as myself, “ and all imaginable Precaution has been us'd in examining into the Truth of this Fact. *Quando futuri avida portentus* “ *Mens, sepe accersitam Ventriloquam, ac exutam amictu, nequid fraudis occultaret, inspectare & audire concupivit.* This “ *Demon* (as our Author adds) is called *Cincinnatius*, and when the Woman calls upon him by his Name, he imme- “ diately answers her.” In like Manner several ancient Writers have inform'd us, that, in the Times of *Paganism*, evil Spirits had Communion with these *ventriloque per partes secretiores*; but, at present, we shall only take Notice of a remarkable Passage in *St Chrysostom*, which we chuse to give the Reader in *Latin*. *Traditur Pythia Femina fuisse, que in Tripode sedens expansa malignum spiritum per interna immittit, & per Genitales partes subentem excipiens, Furore repletur, ipsaque resolutis Crinibus baccharetur, ex ore spumam emittens, & sic Furoris verba loquebatur, &c.* Saurin, Vol. IV. Dissert. 36.





To the right Reverend Father in God STEPHEN Lord Bishop of  
 EXETER this Plate is most humbly Inscrib'd by his Lordsh.<sup>ps</sup>  
 most Dutifull Son & Servant Tho.<sup>s</sup> Stackhouse.





A. M.  
2888, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1116, &c.

*do these Things are an Abomination to the Lord: And therefore their Punishment was this:—(a) A Man, or a Woman, that hath a familiar Spirit, or that is a Wizard, shall surely be put to Death. They shall stone them with Stones, their Blood shall be upon them. Nor was it only the Practicers of such vile Arts, but those likewise, that resorted to them upon any Occasion, were liable to the same Punishment; for (b) the Soul that turneth after such as have familiar Spirits, and after Wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my Face against that Soul, and will cut him off from among his People, saith the Lord.*

SUCH was the Severity of the Jewish Laws against those, who either practis'd, or encourag'd any Manner of magical Arts; and it must be said in Saul's Commendation, that he had put the Laws in Execution against such vile People, he had destroy'd, and drove away (c) those, that had familiar Spirits, and the Wizards out of the Land; and yet, (observe the Weakness, as well as the Wickedness of the Man!) when himself fell into Distress, and had abundant Reason to believe that God had forsaken him, he flees to one of these Creatures for Relief, and requests of her to raise up his old Friend Samuel, as expecting very probably some Advice from him: But, whether this was really done or no, or, if done, in what Manner it was effected, are Points that have so much ex-

ercis'd the Heads and Pens, both of ancient and modern, both of Jewish and Christian Writers, that little or nothing new can be said upon them; and therefore all, that I shall endeavour to do, will be to reduce their several Sentiments into as narrow a Compass, and to state them in as fair a Light, as I can, by enquiring into these three Particulars.

1. WHETHER there was a real Apparition.

2. WHAT this Apparition (if real) was; and,

3. BY what Means, and for what Purposes, it was effected.

1. IT cannot be deny'd indeed, but that those, who explode the Reality of the Apparition, and make it to be all nothing but a Cheat and Juggle of the Sorcerers, have found out some Arguments, that, at first Sight, make a tolerable Appearance: They tell us, (d) that the sacred History never once makes mention of Saul's seeing Samuel with his own Eyes. It informs us indeed, that Saul knew him by the Description, which the Woman gave, and that he held, for some considerable Time, a Conversation with him; but since it is no where said that he really saw him, "Why might not the Woman counterfeited a Voice, and pretend it was Samuel's? When Saul ask'd her to \* raise him up Samuel, i. e. to disturb the Ghost

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

The Arguments of those, who take the Whole for a Cheat of the Witch.

(a) Levit. xx. 27.

(b) Ibid. ver. 6.

(c) 1 Sam. xxviii. 3.

(d) Scot and Webster upon Witchcraft.

\* What Forms of Inchantment were antiently us'd in the Practice of Necromancy, we are at a Loss to know, because we read of none, that the Pythones of Endor employ'd; but this might probably happen, because the Ghost of Samuel came upon her sooner than she expected, and before she had begun her Incantations. That however there were several Rites, Spells, and Invocations us'd upon these Occasions, we may learn from almost every antient Author; but from none more particularly than from Lucan, who brings in Eriotho animating a dead Body, in order to tell young Pompey the Fate of the Civil War. The Ceremonies, she uses for this Purpose, are thus describ'd in our excellent Translator of that Poet.

This said: She runs the mangled Carcase o'er,  
And wipes from ev'ry Wound the crusty Gore;  
Now with hot Blood the frozen Breast she warms,  
And with strong Lunar Dews confirms her Charms.  
Anon she mingles ev'ry monstrous Birth,  
Which Nature, wayward and perverse, brings forth.  
Nor, Entrails of the spotted Lynx she lacks,  
Nor bony Joins from fell Hyena's Backs;  
Nor Deers hot Marrow, rich with snaky Blood,  
Nor Foam of raging Dogs, that fly the Flood.

Her Store the tardy Remora supplies,  
With Stones from Eagles warm, and Dragons Eyes;  
Snakes, that on Pinions cut their airy Way,  
And nimbly o'er Arabian Deserts prey. &c.  
'T'o these she joins dire Drugs without a Name,  
A thousand Poisons never known to Fame;  
Herbs, o'er whose Leaves the Hag her Spells had sung;  
And wet with cursed Spittle, as they sprung.  
With every other Mischief most abhor'd,  
Which Hell, or worse Eriotho could afford.

Having



A. M.  
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1116, &c.

" Ghost of so great a Prophet, she might  
" think he was no common Man; and  
" when (e) *he* *swore* unto her by the Lord,  
" that he would defend her from all Dan-  
" ger, he gave her Intimation enough  
" that he was the *King*. (f) The crafty  
" Woman therefore, having picked up  
" the Knowledge of this, might retire  
" into her Closet or Cell, and there,  
" having her *Familiar*, i. e. some cunning  
" artful Man, to make proper *Responses*,  
" in a different Voice, might easily impose  
" upon one, who was distracted with  
" anxious Thoughts, and had already  
" shewn sufficient *Credulity*, in thinking  
" there was any Efficacy in *magical* Ope-  
" rations to evocate the Dead.

" THE Controversy between *Saul* and  
" *David* every one knew; nor was it  
" now become a Secret, that the Crown  
" was to devolve upon the *latter*: And  
" therefore that Part of the Discourse,  
" which pass'd between *Saul* and *Samuel*,  
" any Man of a common Genius might  
" have hit off, without much Difficulty.  
" *Endor* was not so far distant from *Gilboa*  
" or *Shunem*, but that the Condition of  
" the two Armies might easily be known,  
" and that the *Philistines* were superior  
" both in Courage and Numbers; and  
" therefore his *Respondent*, without all  
" Peradventure, might prognosticate *Saul's*  
" Defeat; and, tho' there was some Ha-  
" zard in the last Conjecture, *viz.* that  
" he and his Sons would die in Battle; yet  
" there was this Advantage on the Side of  
" the *Guests*, that they were all Men of  
" known and experienc'd Valour, who  
" would rather sacrifice their Lives, than

" turn their Backs upon their Enemies." From 1 Sam.  
Upon the whole therefore, the Main- i. to the End.  
tainers of this *Hypothesis* conclude, that, as  
there is no Reason, so there was no Ne-  
cessity for any *miraculous* Interposition in  
this Affair, since this is no more, than what  
any common *Gipsy*, with another in Con-  
federacy to assist her, might do to any  
*credulous* Person, who came to consult  
her.

THEY, who undertake to oppose this Answer'd by  
Opinion, lay it down for a good Rule, others.  
in the Interpretation of Scripture, —  
That we should, as far as we can, adhere  
to the *primary* Sense of the Words, and  
never have Recourse to any *foreign*, or *sin-*  
*gular* Explication, but where the *literal*  
is inconsistent either with the *Dictates*  
of right Reason, or the *Analogy* of Faith.  
Let any indifferent Person then, *say they*,  
take into his Hand the Account of *Saul's*  
consulting this *Sorceress*, and, upon the  
first reading it, he must confess, that the  
Notion, which it conveys to his Mind, is  
that of a *real Apparition*; and since the  
Passages, that both precede and follow it,  
are *confessedly* to be taken in their most  
obvious Meaning, why should a strange  
and forc'd Construction be put upon this?  
(g) Have we not as much Reason to enter-  
tain a good Opinion of the Author of this  
History, his Ability, his Integrity, his  
Knowledge of what he wrote about, and  
his undesigning to deceive us, as we can  
have of any *Critick* or *Commentator* upon  
it; and therefore, when he gives us to  
understand that the Woman *saw Samuel*,  
upon what Presumption are we led to  
disbelieve it? *Saul* and his Companions  
might

Having thus prepar'd the Body, she makes her Invocation in these Words:

Ye Furies! and thou black, accursed Hell!  
Ye Woes, in which the Damn'd for ever dwell!  
*Ghosts*, the World's and Form's eternal Foe!  
And thou, sole Arbitrator of all below,  
*Phoebus*! whom ruthless Fates a God ordain,  
And doom to Immortality of Pain.  
Ye fair *Elysian* Mansions of the Blest,  
Where no *Thessalian* Charmer hopes to rest!  
*Styx*! and *Persephone*, compell'd to fly  
Thy fruitful Mother, and the cheerful Sky!

Third *Hecate*! by whom my Whispers breathe  
My secret Purpose to the Shades beneath!  
'Thou greedy *Dog*, who at the infernal Gate,  
In everlasting Hunger still must wait!  
And thou, old *Cerberus*, horrible, and hoar!  
For ever lab'ring back from Shore to Shore, &c.  
Hear all ye *Powers*! if e'er your Hell rejoice  
In the lov'd Horrors of this impious Voice, &c.  
Hear, and obey, &c.

*Pharfalia*, Lib. vi.

(e) 1 Sam. xxviii. 10.

(f) Vid. *Le Clerc's* Comment. in 1 Sam. xxviii. *passim*.  
of the Life of King *David*. Vol. I.

(g) The History



A. M.  
2888, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1116, &c.

might possibly be deceiv'd by an *Impostor* in *Samuel's* Guise; but was the *sacred Historian* therefore deceiv'd, or did he mean to deceive us, when he gives us this plain Account of an Apparition? *Saul* was a bold Man, and too sagacious to become a *Dupe* to a silly Woman. He and his two Attendants came upon her by Night, and before she was prepar'd to act any Juggle or Imposture. They were too well acquainted with the Voice, and Stature, and Figure of *Samuel*, for any other to *personate* him, without being detected. But admitted the Cheat pass'd upon them, how can we think, but that the Author of this Account, who pretends to relate the Transaction as it really happen'd, and is suppos'd to have wrote by the *Inspiration of the Holy Ghost*, would, in some Measure, have let us into the *Secret* of this Imposture. His Business doubtless was to expose such Practices, as far as Truth would allow, and therefore it is unaccountable (unless he meant to delude us with a false Persuasion) that he should omit every Thing, that tended to discover the Fraud, and, in his Narration, insert every Thing, that tended to confirm the Reality of the Prophet's Appearance.

(b) THAT Spirits of another World may assume such Vehicles, as may admit them to a sensible Commerce with us, in like Manner as our Spirits are cloath'd with these Bodies of ours, the best Philosophy will admit; and that they have done so upon extraordinary Occasions, (i) the Appearance of *Moses* and *Elias*, and their conversing with our Saviour on the Mount, do abundantly testify. And therefore if God, for wise Reasons of his Providence, thought fit either to appoint, or permit *Samuel* to

appear to *Saul* upon this Occasion, there seems to be no more Difficulty in the Thing, than his appearing to him at any other Time, while he was alive, and subsisting in the World: For *Saul* saw his Spirit then, no more than he did now; and his Spirit was every whit as able to bear a Body as it was then.

'Tis own'd indeed, that, according to the Series of the Narration, *Saul* did not see the *Apparition* (be it what it will) so soon as the Woman did, because probably the Woman's Body, or some other Object might interpose between him and the first Appearance; or perhaps, because the *Vehicle*, which *Samuel* assum'd upon this Occasion, was not, as yet, condens'd enough to be visible to *Saul*, tho' it was to the Woman: But that he did actually see him is manifest, because when he *perceived* (which Word in the *Original* signifies *seeing so*, as to be assur'd of our Object) that it was *Samuel*, † he stooped with his Face to the Ground, and bowed himself; which a Man is not apt to do to bare *Ideas* or *Imaginations*.

PERSONS of this Woman's Character, who are under the Displeasure of the Government, generally affect Obscurity, live privately, and are little acquainted with Affairs of *State*: But suppose her to have been never so great a *Politician*, and never so intimate with what had pass'd between *Saul* and *Samuel* heretofore; never so well assur'd, that God had rejected him, and elected *David* in his Stead; yet how could she come to the Knowledge of this, *viz.* That the Battle should be fought the next Day, the *Israelites* be routed, *Saul* and his Sons slain, and their Spoils fall into the Enemy's Hands; since each

9 C

of

(b) The History of the Life of King *David*. Vol. I.

(i) Matth. xvii. 3.

† That *Saul's* stooping to the Ground, and bowing himself, was a certain Indication of his *seeing Samuel*; is apparent from several Expressions of the same Nature in the sacred History. Thus, when *Jacob* met *Esau*, the Text tells us, that the *Handmaids*, and *Leah*, and *Rachel*, and their Children bowed themselves, Gen. xxxiii. 2. When *David* arose out of his Hiding-place, upon the Signal, that *Jonathan* gave him, the Text tells us, that he fell with his Face to the Ground, and bowed himself, 1 Sam. xx. 41. And when the Messenger from *Saul's* Camp came to *David* at *Ziklag*, the Text tells us, that he fell to the Earth, and did Obedience, 2 Sam. xiv. 4. But the Text takes no Notice, either of the Messenger's *seeing David*, or *David's* *seeing Jonathan*: Or, *Jacob's* Family *seeing Esau*. This is sufficiently imply'd in their making their Obedience to them; because it is incongruous to suppose, that any would bow, and shew other Tokens of outward Reverence and Respect to Persons they did not see. The History of the Life of King *David*. Vol. I.

From 1 Sam.  
i. to the End.



A. M.  
2888, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1116, &c.

of these Events (even in the present Situation of *Saul's* Affairs) were highly casual and uncertain? For might not this Prince lose a Battle, without losing his Life? Or, if he himself fell in the Action, why must his three Sons be all cut off in the same Day? Whatever Demonstrations of *innate* Bravery he had given in Times past, after such severe Menaces as he now receiv'd from the *Apparition*; Prudence, one would think, would have put him upon providing for his Safety, either by *chicaning* with the Enemy, or retiring from the Field of Battle, without going to expose himself, his Sons, and his whole Army, to certain and inevitable Death. These are Things which no human *Penetration* could reach, and which only *he*, who is the absolute and Almighty Ruler of all Causes and Events, could either foresee or foretel: And how unlikely is it, that God Almighty should make use of this *Sorceress* (*k*) as a Prophetess, and give her the Honour of revealing his Counsels, when at the same Time, he concurr'd with her in the Imposition put upon *Saul*, by making him believe that *Samuel* appear'd and talk'd, when there was no *Samuel* there?

BUT the Truth is, those menacing Predictions, how proper soever for a Messenger sent from God to utter, were highly imprudent, either in this *Witch's*, or her *Accomplice's* Mouth: For, since they knew nothing of *Futurity*, and were, at the best, but put to *Conjecture*, it is much more reasonable to believe, that, at such a Juncture as this, (*l*) they would have bethought themselves of flattering the King, and giving him Comfort, and promising Success, and not of thundering out such *Comminations* against him, as might probably incense him, but could do themselves no good. They could not but know, that the Temper of most Kings is to hate to hear *shocking* Truths, and to receive with the utmost Despite those, that bring them ill News: And therefore 'tis natural to suppose, that had these

threatening Replies been of the Woman's, or her *Confederate's* forming, they would have given them quite another Turn, and not run the Hazard of disobliging the King to no Purpose, by laying an additional Load of Trouble upon him. In short, (*m*) the whole Tenor of *Samuel's* Speech to King *Saul* is too rough and ungrateful, too grave and solemn, I may add also, too full of Truth and Reality, ever to have proceeded from their Contrivance and Invention only.

THE Woman, by her courteous Entertainment of *Saul*, seems to be a Person of no bad Nature; and therefore, if she had an *Accomplice*, who understood to make the most of his Profession, his Business at this Time must have been, to *sooth* and *cajole* the King, which would have both put Money in his Pocket, and sav'd the Credit of his Predictions. For, had he foretold him of Success, and Victory, and a happy Issue out of all his Troubles, he, and the Woman, had been sure of Reputation, as well as farther Rewards, in Case it had happen'd to prove so; and if it had not, (since no one was privy to their Communication) the Falshood of the Prediction, upon *Saul's* Defeat and Death, must, in Course, have been bury'd with him.

FROM these Reasons then we may infer, that the Woman, in this Transaction, did not impose upon *Saul*, since he had a Plain Sight of the Apparition: What the Apparition foretold him was above human Penetration; and (upon the Supposition of a *Juggle*) the *Witch*, and her Confederate would have certainly acted clean contrary to what they did. And so the next

2. Enquiry meets us, namely, *What this Apparition was?* Some of the ancient *Doctors*, both of the *Jewish* and *Christian* Church, have made an *Evil Angel* the Subject of this Apparition, in pure Regard to the Honour of God. "God" say they, had sufficiently declar'd his "Hatred against *Necromancy*, and all" Kinds

From 1 Sam.  
i. to the End.

(k) *Waterland's* Sermons, Vol. II.  
*Ibid.*

(l) *Calmet's* Dissert. sur l'Apparition de *Samuel*.

(m) *Waterland's*



A. M. 2888, &c.  
Ant. Christ. 1116, &c.

“ Kinds of *Witchcraft*, in the severe  
“ Laws, which he enacted against them;  
“ but 'tis certainly denying himself, and  
“ cancelling his own Work; to seem in  
“ the least to countenance, or abet them,  
“ as he necessarily must do, if, upon  
“ the Evocation of an old *Hag*; any  
“ Messenger is permitted to go from him.  
“ Far be it from us therefore to have  
“ such Conceptions of God. He is holy,  
“ and just, and uniform in all his Ways;  
“ and therefore this *coming at a Call*,  
“ and doing the *Witch's* Drudgery, must  
“ only appertain to some *infernal* Spirit,  
“ who might possibly find his Account  
“ in it at last. 'Twas one of this wick-  
“ ed Crew, that either assumed a *Phan-*  
“ *tom*, or a real Body, appear'd in a  
“ *Mantle* like *Samuel*, spake articulately,  
“ and held this Conversation with *Saul*;  
“ which, considering his Knowledge and  
“ Foresight of Things, he was well  
“ enough qualified to do, notwithstand-  
“ ing the sundry Predictions, relating to  
“ future *Contingencies*, which are contain'd  
“ in it.”

Answer'd, by  
showing it was  
not the Devil.

How far the Honour of God is concern'd in this Transaction, will more properly fall under our next Enquiry: In the mean Time, I cannot but observe, that, whatever *Incongruity* may be suppos'd in the real *Appearance* of *Samuel*, it is not near so much, as to find one of the *apostate* Spirits of *Hell* expressing so much Zeal for the Service of the God of *Heaven*, and upbraiding *Saul* with those very Crimes, which he himself tempted him to commit; as to find this wicked and impure Spirit making use of the Name of God (that sacred and tremendous Name, whose very Pronunciation was enough to make him quake and shiver) no less than six Times in this Intercourse with *Saul*, without any Manner of Uneasiness or Hesitation; as to find this Angel of Darkness, and *Father of Lies*, prying into the Womb of *Futurity*, and determining the most ca-

ful Events positively and precisely. (n) From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

We do not indeed deny, but that the Devil's Knowledge is vastly superior to that of the most accomplish'd human Understanding; that his natural *Penetration*, join'd with his long Experience, is such, that the greatest *Philosophers*, the subtlest *Criticks*, and the most refined *Politicians* are mere *Novices* in Comparison of him: Yet what *Genius*, (however exalted and improved) without a divine *Revelation*, could (as we said before) be able to foretel Things, that were lodg'd in God's own Breast; viz. the precise Time of the two Armies engaging, the Success and Consequence of the Victory, and the very Names of the Persons, that were to fall in Battle. This is what the Apparition plainly revealed to *Saul*: And yet this, we dare maintain, is more than any *finite* Understanding, by its own mere Capacity, could ever have been able to find out.

BUT (without this Multitude of Arguments) if we are to take the Scripture in its plain and literal Sense, read we over the Story of *Saul* and the Witch of *Endor* never so often, we shall not so much as once find the Devil mention'd in it. And therefore 'tis somewhat wonderful; that he should be brought upon the Stage by many learned Men, merely to solve a *Difficulty*, which, upon Examination, appears to be none at all. But now, on the other Hand, it appears, that, thro' the whole Narration, *Samuel* is the only Thing that is mention'd. 'Tis *Samuel*, whom *Saul* desires to be call'd up; *Samuel*, who appear'd to the Woman; *Samuel*, whom the Woman describes; *Samuel*, whom *Saul* perceives and bows himself to, with whom he converses so long, and, *because of whose Words*, he was afterwards so fore afraid.

THE Scripture indeed speaks sometimes according to the *Appearance* of Things, and may call that by the Name of *Samuel*, which was only the *Semblance*,

or



A. M.  
2888, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1116, &c.

or *Phantom* of him: But, that this cannot be the Sense of the Matter here, we have the Testimony of the wise Son of *Sirach*, (an excellent Interpreter of *canonical* Scriptures) who tells us expressly, that (o) *Samuel, after his Death, prophesied, and shewed the King his End*; pursuant to what we read in the Version of the *Septuagint*, viz. that, (p) *Saul asked Counsel of one, that had a familiar Spirit, and Samuel answered him*. So that, upon the whole, we may be allow'd to conclude, that it was the real Soul of *Samuel*, cloath'd in some visible *Form*, which, at this Time, appear'd to the King of *Israel*: But by what Means, or for what Purposes, it appear'd, is the other Question, we are now to determine.

That Samuel  
was not rais'd  
up by the  
Devil.

3. SEVERAL of the (q) *Fathers* of the *Christian Church* were of Opinion, that the Devil had a certain *limited* Power over the Souls of the Saints, before *Jesus Christ* descended into *Hell*, and rescued them from the Tyranny of that Prince of Darkness. (r) *St Austin*, in particular, thinks, that there is no Absurdity in saying, that the Devil was as able to call up *Samuel's* Soul, as he was to present himself among the Sons of God, or set our Saviour on one of the *Pinacles* of the *Temple*; and a (s) learned *Jewish Doctor* supposes, that Devils have such a Power over human Souls, for the Space of a Year after their Departure, as to make them assume what Bodies they please; and thereupon he concludes, (but very erroneously) that it was not a Year, from the Time of *Samuel's* Death, to his Appearance. But these are such wild and extravagant Fancies, as deserve no serious Confutation. 'Tis absurd to say, that the Souls of Saints (such as we are now speaking of) were ever in *Hell*, and more absurd to say, that, if they are in Heaven, it is in the Power of any *magical*, nay, of any *diabolical* Incantations

to call them down from thence. (t) From 1 Sam. i. to the End. Great, without all doubt, is the Power of *apostate* Angels; but miserable, we may say, would the State of the Blessed be, if the other had any Licence to disturb their Happiness, when, and as long, as they pleas'd: For God forbid, (u) says *Tertullian*, that we should believe, that the Soul of any holy Man, much less of a Prophet, should be so far under his Disposol, as to be brought up at Pleasure by the Power of the Devil.

SINCE the Devil then has no Power to disturb the Happiness of Souls departed, this Apparition of *Samuel* could not proceed from any *magical* Enchantments of the Sorcerers, but must have been effected by the sole Power and Appointment of God, who is the sovereign Lord both of the Living and of the Dead: And, accordingly, we may observe from the Surprise, which the Woman discover'd upon *Samuel's* sudden appearing, that the Power of her *Magick* was not concern'd therein, but that it was the Effect of some superior Hand. The Scripture relates the Matter thus: (x) *When the Woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud Voice; and the Woman spake unto Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me, for thou art Saul? And the King said unto her, Be not afraid: What sawest thou? And the Woman said unto Saul, I saw Gods ascending out of the Earth*. Now, it is plain, from this Narration, that the Woman saw something she was not accusom'd to see. (y) Her *Necromancy* had ordinarily Power over *Demons* only, or such wretched Spirits, as were submitted to the Devil's Tyranny; but, on this Occasion, she saw an Object, so august, so terrible, so majestick, so contrary indeed to any Thing she had ever rais'd before, and that coming upon her before she had begun her Enchantments, that she could not forbear being frighten'd, and crying out with a loud Voice, as being fully

Nor by the  
Witch's En-  
chantments,  
but by God's  
Discretion.

(o) *Reclus*. xlv. 20.

1 *Reg.* Cap. xxviii.

(t) *Saurin*, Vol. IV. Dissert. 36.

Dissert. sur l'Apparit. de *Samuel*.

(p) 1 *Chron.* x. 13.

(r) *De Diver. Quest.* lib. ii. p. 4.

(u) *De Anima*, c. 57.

(q) *Justin Martyr*, in *Dial. cum Tryph.* and *Origen*, in

(s) *R. Manass. Ben Israel*, de *Resurr. Mort.*

(x) 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 12, 13.

(y) *Calmet's*



A. M. 2888, &c.  
Ant. Christ. 1116, &c.  
An Objection.

fully satisfy'd, that the Apparition came from God.

" BUT, since the Scripture assures us, that God had wholly withdrawn himself from *Saul*, and would answer him neither by *Prophets*, nor by *Dreams*; how can we imagine, that he should, all on a sudden, become so kind, as to send *Samuel* to him, or that *Samuel* should be in any Disposition to come, when it was impossible for him to do any Good by his coming."

Answer'd, by shewing upon what Accounts God sent a Messenger to *Saul*.

(2) Now there seems to be some *Analogy* between God's dealing with *Saul* in this Particular, and his former Treatment of the Prophet *Balaam*. *Balaam* was for disobeying the Orders which God had given him to bless the *Israelites*; and was searching into *magical* Secrets for what he could not obtain of God, viz. a Power to change into Curses the Blessings, which God pronounc'd by his Mouth. In this Case there was but small Likelihood, that God would continue to communicate himself to a Person so unworthy of any extraordinary Revelation; and yet he did it: But then it was with a Design to reveal to him those very Miseries, from which his mercenary Mind was so desirous to rescue the *Midianites*. The Application is easy: And it farther suggests this Reason, why God appointed *Samuel*, at this Time, to appear unto *Saul*, viz. that, thro' him, he might give him a Meeting where he least of all expected one; and might shew him, that the Fate, which his own Disobedience had brought upon him, was determin'd; that there was no reversing the Decrees of Heaven, no procuring Aid against the Almighty's Power, no fleeing (tho' it were to *Hell*) from his Presence, no hiding himself in *Darkness* from his Inspection, (a) *with whom Darkness is no Darkness at all, but the Night is as clear as the Day, and the Darkness and Light are both alike.*

And why it was *Samuel*.

(b) THAT the Souls of Men departed have a Capacity, and, no doubt, an Inclination

to be employ'd in the Service of Men alive, as having the same Nature and Affections, and being more sensible of our Infirmitiēs, than any pure and abstracted Spirits are, can hardly be contested; that, in their absent State, they are embodied with *aërial*, or *ætherial* Vehicles, which they can condense, or rarify at Pleasure, and so appear, or not appear to human Sight, is what some of the greatest Men, both of the *Heathen* and *Christian* Religion, have maintain'd; and that frequent Apparitions of this Kind have happen'd, since the World began, cannot be denied by any one, that is conversant in its History. If therefore the Wisdom of God (for Reasons already assign'd) thought proper to dispatch a Messenger to *Saul*, upon this Occasion; there may be some Account given, why the Soul of *Samuel* (upon the Supposition it was left to its Option) should rather be desirous to be sent upon that Errand: For, whatever may be said in Diminution of *Saul's* religious Character, 'tis certain, that he was a brave Prince and Commander; had liv'd in strict Intimacy with *Samuel*; profess'd a great Esteem for him in all Things; and (c) was, by *Samuel*, not a little lamented, when he had fallen from his Obedience to God. Upon these Considerations we may imagine, that the Soul of *Samuel* might have such a Kindness for him, as to be ready to appear to him in the Depth of his Distress, in order to settle his Mind by telling him the *Upshot* of the whole Matter, viz. that he should lose the Battle, and he and his Sons be slain; that so he might give a Specimen (as the *Jews* love to speak in Commendation of him) of the bravest Valour, that was ever achiev'd by any Commander; fight boldly when he was sure to die; and sell his Life at as dear a Price as possible; that so in his Death, he might be commemorated with Honour, and deserve the *Threnodia*, which his Son-in-law made on him; (d) *The Beauty of Israel is slain upon*

(2) *Saurin*, Vol. IV. Dissert. 36. umphatus. (c) 1 Sam. xvi. 1.

(a) Psal. cxxxix. 12. (d) 2 Sam. i. 10.

(b) Vide *Glanvil's* Sadducismus Triumphans.



A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Christ. 1116, &c. *upon the high Places. How are the Mighty fallen! From the Blood of the Slain, from the Fat of the Mighty, the Bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the Sword* of Saul turned not empty. *How are the Mighty fallen in the Midst of the Battle!* From 1 Sam. i. to the End.



## C H A P. IV.

*From the Death of SAUL, to that of ABSALOM. In all Thirty Three Years.*

## The HISTORY.

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Christ. 1055, &c.

*Upon the Death of Saul, David is proclaim'd King of Judah, and Ishbosheth has the other Tribes.*

**D**AVID was at Ziklag, when News was brought him of the Defeat of the *Israelitish* Army, and of the Death of *Saul*. The Messenger was an *Amalekite*, † who pretended that he was the Person who dispatch'd the King, after he found himself mortally wounded; and (however he came by them) produc'd *Saul's* Crown and Bracelet to verify what he said. He expected, no doubt, an ample Compensation for this Message and Present; but, instead of that, *David* order'd his Guards to fall upon him,

because (according to his own Declaration) he had been accessory to the King's Death.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

UPON this Conjuncture, *David*, † by God's Directions, remov'd with his Family and Forces † to *Hebron*, whither the Princes of *Judah*, in a short Time, came to congratulate his Return into his native Country, and to offer him the Crown of their particular Tribe; for, by this Time, *Abner*, the late King's Uncle, and General of his Army, who had proclam'd his Son *Ishbosheth* Successor to the Throne,

† By the Account, which we have of King *Saul's* Death, in the Conclusion of the foregoing Book, viz. that he fell upon his own Sword, and expir'd, 1 Sam. xxxi. 4. it seems very evident, that the whole Story of this *Amalekite* was a Fiction of his own inventing, on Purpose to ingratiate himself with *David*, the presumptive Successor to the Throne: But then the Question is, how he came by *Saul's* Crown and Bracelet, since it is incongruous to think that he would ever wear them in the Time of Action, and thereby expose himself as a publick Mark? As therefore it is presum'd, that they were carry'd into the Field of Battle by some of his Attendants, in order to be put on, in Case he had obtain'd the Victory, and return'd in Triumph; so the *Jews* have a Conceit, that *Dorg*, the infamous Murderer of the Priests at *Nob*, 1 Sam. xxii. 18. who, at this Time, was his Armour-Bearer, had them in his Possession, and, before he killed himself, gave them to his Son, (this young *Amalekite*) and order'd him to carry them to *David*, but to his Cost found, that *David's* Reception was quite different to what he expected. For, being shortly to ascend the Throne himself, he was willing to have it believ'd, that to slay the Lord's anointed, upon any Account whatever, was in itself an execrable Crime, and therefore, to clear himself from the Imputation of being any Ways accessory to so foul a Fact, (as his Enemies would have been apt to imagine, had he given countenance to this pretended King-killer) he order'd him immediately to be put to Death, and therein, at least, acted the Part of a good Politician, if not of a righteous Judge. *Le Clerc's* and *Patrick's* Commentaries on 2 Sam. i.

† Though *David*, after *Saul's* Demise, had a Right to the Kingdom by Virtue of God's Designation; yet, as God had no where declar'd, at what Time he was to make use of this Right, he would not enter into Possession, nor take the Administration of publick Affairs upon him, without having first consulted him. *Patrick's* Commentary.

† *Hebron* was situate in the Midst of the Tribe of *Judah*; and, as it was a very ancient City, the Metropolis of the whole Tribe, and the Possession of those Priestly Families, who espous'd *David's* Interest. It was a very commodious City for him to make the Place of his Residence at this Juncture; as being not unsensible, that the Determination of the Metropolis in his Favour would be of great Weight to influence the whole Tribe: And, accordingly, we find, that he was soon invest'd with the Sovereignty thereof. For the Men of *Judah* (saith the Text) came, and they anointed *David* King over the House of *Judah*, 2 Sam. ii. 4. The History of the Life of King *David*. Vol. II.



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
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1055, &c.

Throne, had taken up his Residence at † *Mahanaim*, on the other Side of *Jordan*, and, by his Interest and great Authority, prevail'd with all the other Tribes to recognize him.

A Battle be-  
tween the two  
Rival Kings.

*DAVID* however, at the Request of the Princes of his own Tribe, was anointed King of *Judah*. For two Years there were no Hostilities on either Side, but, not long after this, a War commenc'd between the two *Rival Princes*, in which there were several Engagements, but none so remarkable, as that, which was occasion'd by *Abner's* sending *Joab* (who was the General of *David's* Forces) a Challenge † to fight twelve Men with an equal Number of his in single Combat. The Men met, and (to a Man) kill'd one another upon the Spot; whereupon a fierce Battle ensu'd, in which *Abner* and his Men were defeated, and put to Flight. In the Pursuit, *Asabel*, a younger Brother of *Joab's*, being very nimble and swift of Foot, made after *Abner*. When he came up with him, *Abner*, who knew him, desir'd him to desist, and not pretend to attack him, because he was loth to kill him; but the young Man, ambitious of taking a General Prisoner, press'd so hard upon him, that, † with a Back-stroke of his Spear, *Abner* gave him a Wound, whereof he immediately died.

THE victorious Army, when they came to the Place, where *Asabel's* Body lay

lain, stood still, and ceas'd their Pursuit; so that *Abner* had an Opportunity to rally his scatter'd Forces, and making a Stand upon an advanc'd Ground, where he could not well be attack'd, founded a Parly, and reminded *Joab*, that they were all Brethren, of the same Nation, of the same Religion, so that if they persisted in Hostilities, both Armies would have Reason to rue it. Whereupon they parted, *Abner* (who had lost three hundred and sixty Men in the Engagement) to *Mahanaim*, on the other Side of *Jordan* and *Joab*, who (except his Brother *Asabel*) had lost no more than nineteen, to *Hebron*.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

DURING the Course of this Civil War, which lasted for some Years, *David's* Forces, in most *Encounters*, had the Advantage, and his Interest in the Nation increas'd, as that of *Ishbosheth* sensibly declin'd. *Abner* indeed, as being both a brave and experienc'd Warrior, and a Man of great Power and Influence in all the Tribes, more especially in that of *Benjamin*, was his main Support; but with him he unhappily differ'd, upon Account of *Rizpah*, one of *Saul's* Concubines, whom *Abner* had debauch'd. To have any Commerce with the Relicks of Princes (of what Denomination soever they were) was, in these Days, look'd upon as an Indignity offer'd to the royal Family, and an † Affectation of the Kingdom. For this Reason *Ishbosheth* remon-

*Joab kills Ab-  
ner very haste-  
ly, which  
highly dis-  
pleases David.*

strated

† This was a Place in the Tribe of *Gad*, which had its Name from the Appearance of an Host of Angels to *Jacob*, as he came, with his Family and all his Substance to *Padan-aram*, Gen. xxxii. 1. and the Reasons for *Abner's* retreating hither, in the Beginning of the new King's Reign, were, that he might secure the People on that Side of the *Jordan*, and especially the gallant Inhabitants of *Jabesh-gilead*, who were great Lovers of *Saul*, and attach'd to his Family; that he might prevent the *Philistines* from falling upon the King, whom he had under his Protection, in the Infancy of his Reign; and chiefly, that he might be at a great Distance from *David*, have the new King more absolutely under his Command, and a better Opportunity of raising Recruits among a People, not only brave and courageous, but very well affected to the Cause, which he had espous'd. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Pool's* Annotations.

† The Expression in the Text is, *Let the young Men now arise, and play before us*: By which *Abner* seems to have meant, not that they should fall upon, and destroy one another, but merely, that they should practise a little their military Exercises, or play at Sharps, as *Gladiators* antiently at *Rome*, and now among us, are wont to do, not with any Purpose to kill one another, but only to divert the Spectators. *Calmet's* Commentary.

† The Expression in the Text is, ——— That, *with the hinder Part of the Spear, he smote him under the fifth Rib*; which *Virgil*, speaking of a mortal Wound, has not unhappily imitated:

————— *Haud multa moratus*

*Excipit in latus, &c, quod fata celerrima, crudum*

*Transdidit collas & crates pectoris ensen.*

*Aen. xii.*

† What Notion the World, at this Time, had of marrying any Royal Relict, is evident from the Case of *Adonijah*, whom *Solomon* put to Death for desiring but to ask for *Abishag*, one of *David's* Concubines, tho' he had employ'd *Bath-sheba*, the King's Mother, to be his Intercessor, and was himself his Brother, 1 Kings ii. 17. It may be said, perhaps,



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

strated the Matter to *Abner*; but *Abner*, who was an hot Man, and impatient of Reproof, was so incens'd at what he said, that he upbraided him with Ingratitude, and threaten'd not only to † withdraw his own Allegiance from him, but, as far as in him lay, to carry all *Israel* over to *David's* Interest. And as he threaten'd, so he did. From that very Moment he enter'd into a *private* Correspondence with *David*, and, not long after, had a *publick* Interview with him. At this Interview *David* entertain'd *Abner* and his Attendants (which were in all but twenty Persons) very splendidly; and, in Return, *Abner* assur'd him, that he would use his utmost Endeavours to prevail with the other Tribes to come over to his Side. But, no sooner was he gone, than *Joab*, returning from an Expedition against the *Philistines*, wherein he had been successful and taken Abundance of Spoil, and being soon inform'd, that *Abner* had been there,

and how kindly the King had receiv'd him, he not only expostulated the Matter with the King in high Terms, as having entertain'd a Man that came only as a *Spy* upon him, but sent likewise a Messenger after *Abner*, desiring him to return, because the King had something more to communicate to him; and so, having way-laid him, under Pretence of saluting him he stabb'd him to the Heart, \* out of Jealousy partly, and partly in Revenge of the Blood of his Brother *Asabel*.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

*DAVID* was extremely displeas'd at this cruel and inhospitable Action; but his Affairs were in so unsettled a State, and *Joab*, at that Time, had so much Credit with the Army, that he could not call him to an Account for what he had done: And therefore contented himself with declaring publickly † his Detestation of it, and with making a magnificent Funeral for *Abner*, wherein he himself follow'd the Corps, as chief Mourner.

*DAVID*

perhaps, that *Adonijah* was at this Time aspiring at the Throne, which *Solomon* perceiving, took Occasion from this his Request to fall out with him, and prevent it. But, however this be, a general Rule it was, not among the *Jews* only, but among other Nations, that no private Person should presume to marry the King's Widow; for this made him appear as a *Rival*, and Competitor for the Crown. *Calmer's* Commentary.

† *Abner* is an Instance of what a strange Alteration the Study of Revenge will work in a Man. It was but just lately, that we found him going about the Country to confirm the *Israelites* in their Attachment to the House of *Saul*, and Opposition to *David*; but now, upon a slight Disgust, he is not only for deserting himself, but for carrying all the Strength of his Interest over to the opposite Party: For such is the Genius of many great Ministers, says one, that, upon slight Occasions, they are irritated, and do rather rule over Kings, than are ruled by them. *Patrick's* Commentary.

\* *Abner* was a Man longer vers'd in military Affairs than himself, who, in the Time of *Saul's* Distraction, had been Regent of the Nation, and since the Time, that he had set up *Ishbosheth* to be King, Prime Minister: And therefore *Joab* had Reason to suspect, that, in Case he once got into *David's* Favour, (as the Service, he was able to do him, gave him a Title to it) it would not be long before he would gain a superior Ascendant; and therefore he took this wicked Method to prevent him. For (to use the Reflection, which *Josephus* makes upon this Occasion) What will not Men dare to do, who are covetous, ambitious, and will be inferior to none? They press forward to the End, without ever considering the Means, and will commit a Thousand Crimes in Pursuit of what they desire. Nor are they less bold in maintaining, than they were in acquiring their Places and Preferments by evil Practices; insomuch that, rather than suffer the Disgrace of losing what they have unjustly gotten, they will plunge themselves still deeper and deeper in Wickedness, to retain it. *Jewish Antiq.* lib. vii. c. 1.

† And Reason good he had to express his Detestation of so foul a Fact. For, besides that, *Abner* was himself a Man of great Power and Authority, and, at this Time, the Head of the contrary Party, it carry'd an Air of Suspicion, that *David* might have some Concern in the Murder; especially since *Joab*, his First Minister, and General of his Forces, was the wicked Instrument of it. *Abner* had been reconcil'd to *David* indeed, but this made the Matter still worse, and added the Breach of Faith and Hospitality to the Sin of Murder, which was enough to alienate the Minds of the *Israelites* from him for ever: And therefore *Josephus* gives us this Account of *David's* Behaviour, upon so critical an Occasion, not only to testify his Abhorrence of so base a Practice, but to purge himself likewise, upon the strictest Niceties of Faith and Honour, that he had been true to *Abner*. "The Moment he heard of *Abner's* Death, he stretch'd out his Right-Hand towards Heaven in an Appeal, and Protestation, that he was neither privy, nor consenting to the Fact, and curs'd most bitterly the Assassin, (whoever he was) his Family, and Accomplices. He appointed, by Proclamation, a publick Mourning for him, with all the Solemnities of tearing Garments, and putting on Sack-Cloth, &c. Himself, with his great Ministers, and Officers, assisted at the Funeral, and gave sufficient Demonstration, by wringing their Hands, beating their Breasts, and other Expressions of Sorrow, both of the Veneration they had for *Abner's* Memory, and the Sense they had of so inestimable a Loss; so that, in the Conclusion, all the People were perfectly satisfy'd, that *David* was far, either from approving, or consenting to so execrable a Deed." *Jewish Antiq.* lib. vii. c. 1. and *Le Clerc's* Commentary.



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

*Upon the Death  
of Ishbosheth,  
David is made  
King of all  
Israel.*

*DAVID* indeed had Reason to lament the Death of *Abner*, which, in all Probability, had defeated the Measures that were concerted for the Union of the two Kingdoms, had not the sudden and untimely Death of *Ishbosheth*, paved the Way for it afresh. *Ishbosheth*, upon the Loss of *Abner*, began to despair of his Affairs, grew negligent of himself, and fell under the Contempt of his Subjects; so that *Rechab* and *Baanah*, † two *Benjamites*, that were of his Household, came upon him, as he was asleep in the Heat of the Day; and, having cut off his Head, † carry'd it as a Present to *David* at *Hebron*; but, instead of the Reward which

they expected, he \* rebuk'd them severely, and order'd their Hands and Feet to be cut off, and themselves hung up in a publick Place, for the Terror of all *Regicides*; but the Head of *Ishbosheth* was honourably interr'd in *Abner's* Tomb.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

WHEN *Ishbosheth* was dead, all the Tribes of *Israel* sent their Deputies to *David*, acknowledging his Title, and promising him their Allegiance, upon Condition that he would reign *righteously*, † over them; so that now he was anointed King over all the Tribes, after that he had reign'd at *Hebron*, over That of *Judah* only, for the Space of seven Years and six Months.

BEING

† This is added, to shew us, that these two *Regicides* were not only Officers in the King's Army, but of the same Tribe with *Saul*, and therefore had more Ties than one upon them, to be honest and faithful to his Family. For there is Reason to believe, that *Saul*, who liv'd in the Borders of *Benjamin*, conferr'd more Favours upon that Tribe, than any other, and might therefore justly expect, both to him and his, a greater Esteem and Fidelity from those of his own Tribe, than from others. This *Patronymick* is therefore very properly prefix'd to the Names of *Rechab* and *Baanah*, to shew what vile ungrateful Villains they were, and how justly they deserv'd the severe, and exemplary Punishment, which *David* inflicted on them. *Le Clerc's* Commentary.

† It may seem a little strange, that these two *Ruffians* were not discourag'd by *David's* punishing the *Amalekite* for killing of *Saul*, and by the Detestation, he had publickly shewn of *Joab's* Baseness in murdering *Abner*: But the former of these Cases, they might think, was not parallel to theirs; because *Saul* was anointed King by God's immediate Direction, whereas *Ishbosheth*, having never had such sacred Unction, was no more than an *Usurper*: And, as for the latter, they might think, that *David's* Conduct, in Relation to *Abner's* Death, proceeded from Art and Policy, rather than any serious Dislike of the Thing itself; and, in this Opinion, they might the rather be confirm'd, when they saw *Joab*, instead of being punish'd, continuing in the very same Post and Power that he had before. *Pool's* Annotations.

\* The Manner in which *Josephus* makes *David* express himself upon this Occasion, is to this Effect: —

“ Wicked Wretches that you are! prepare yourselves immediately to receive the just Reward of your Villainy. Do not you know that I requited the Murder of *Saul*, when he, who had taken away that sacred Life, had the Confidence to bring me his golden Crown, for an Ostentation of the Service he had done me in it? And yet it was at the Instance of *Saul* that he did it, and to prevent the Indignity of his being taken alive by his Enemies. And am not I the same Man now that I was then? Or do you think that I am turn'd so abandon'd a Wretch since, as to countenance the most profligate of Men and Actions, or to account myself under any Obligation to you, for dipping your Hands (upon my Account, as you would have it thought) in the Blood of your Lord? For cutting the Throat of a Person (and in his Bed too) so just, that he never did any Man Wrong, and so generous a Patron and Benefactor to your ungrateful Selves, that all the Advantages you can pretend to in this World, are but what you stand indebted for to his Bounty and Goodness. You shall therefore now be sure to pay, both for your Breach of Faith to your Master, and the Scandal you have cast upon me. For what greater Wound can any Man give me in my Reputation, than to expose me for a Person, that can take Pleasure in the Tidings, or give Countenance to the committing of so barbarous an Assassinate?” *Jewish Antiq.* lib. vii. c. 2. Which Speech of *David's* has a good deal of the Spirit of *Alexander the Great* in it, whose exacting of Punishment of *Bessus* for his Murder of *Darius*, drew from the *Historian* this Reflection. *Reputabat enim, non tam hostem suum fuisse Darium, quam Amicum ejus, à quo esset occisus.* *Justin.* lib. xii. c. 6.

† This was *David's* Part of the Covenant, which the Elders of *Israel* suggested to him in a very elegant Metaphor, which here occurs the first Time, though afterwards it is frequently us'd in sacred Writ, especially in the *Prophets*, as well as some profane Authors. The Expression is, — Thou shalt feed my People *Israel*; which was the rather made use of, to put *David* in Mind, that he was created a King, not so much for the Advancement of his own Honour and Interest, as for the Good and Benefit of the Community, which he was to rule with all Tenderness, and watch over with all Diligence. The very Manner of the Expression implies, that Kings ought to have the same Care of their People, as the Shepherd has over his Flock; and that, as the Shepherd is not the Owner of the Sheep he keeps, so should no King look upon his Subjects as his own *Peculium*, but as a Flock committed to him by the only true Lord of all Mankind, and to whom he must give an Account of his Administration. For this is the greatest Grace of a King, that he certainly believes himself to be made a King by God for the Sake of the People; and let him often call to Mind, that the People were not created, or ordain'd by God for the King, says *Conradus Pelicanus* upon these Words. *Patrick's* Commentary, and *Pool's* Annotations.



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.  
He takes Je-  
rusalem, and  
enlarges it.

BEING thus invested with full regal Power, and having † a Multitude of brave and gallant Soldiers to attend him, he made his first Expedition against *Jerusalem*; to dispossess the *Jebusites* of the Fort of *Zion*, which commanded the City, and was thought so impregnable, that, when he summon'd the Besieg'd to surrender, they, in Derision, reply'd, that the Meanest of them all († their *Blind* and *Lame*) were able to defend it against all he could do. This incens'd *David* to such a Degree, that he caus'd Proclamation to be made through the Camp, that, whoever first took the Fort, should be made *Captain-General* of all his Forces; whereupon *Joab*, who was a bold, pushing Man, undertook to storm it, and carry'd it Sword in Hand. After this, *David*, for the Reception of his Guards and Domesticks, enlarg'd the Buildings of the Place, and made it his Royal Palace; while *Joab* repair'd, and beautify'd the old City *Jebus*, or *Jerusalem*, for the more commodious Habitation of his Subjects.

† *HIRAM*, who had lately made himself King of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, hearing how prosperous *David* was in all his Affairs, sent an Embassy to congratulate his Accession to the Throne, and withal a Present of Cedar-Trees, with Carpenters and other Artificers to assist him in his Buildings. But the *Philistine* Princes had other Notions of *David's* growing Greatness, which they took for a sure *Presage* of their own Downfall; and therefore, to put a Stop to it as soon as possible, they rais'd one great Army, which (as they approach'd to *Jerusalem*) he defeated; and, the next Year, when they came † with a much larger, God manifestly interpos'd in his Favour. For, instead of advancing directly upon them, he order'd him to take a Compass round by a Wood of *Mulberry-Trees*, which would cover and conceal his March, and, when he heard a Sound, or Rushing in the Trees, (which would affrighten the *Philistines*) then to fall upon them; which he accordingly did, and gave them so total a De-  
feat,

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.  
Subdues the  
Philistine  
Princes.

† In this Account of *David's* Worthies, which are mention'd both in the second Book of *Samuel*, and the first of *Chronicles*, there is a great Difference of Names, and the Reason is, because the Catalogue in *Chronicles* was made in the Beginning of *David's* Reign, that in *Samuel*, at the latter End; and so the former mentions those Men, who had help'd *David* to his Settlement in the Kingdom, whereas the latter takes Notice of those, who had stuck to him all the Time of his Reign, and died in his Service. *Bedford's* Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 5.

† The *Blind* and the *Lame*, says *Luther* upon this Place, were the Idols of the *Jebusites*, which, to irritate *David*, they set upon their Walls, as their Patrons and Protectors; and these they call *blind* and *lame* sarcastically, and with Respect to *David's* Opinion: As if they had said, "These Gods of ours, whom ye *Israelites* reproach, as *blind* and *lame*, and so unable to direct or defend us; will secure us against you, and, to your Cost, make you find, that they are neither *blind* nor *lame*, but have Eyes to watch for us, and Hands to fight against you, so that you must conquer and subdue them, before you take this Place." But this Interpretation seems to be a little too metaphorical and forc'd, for which Reason we have rather chosen the Construction which *Josephus* (lib. vii. c. 2.) puts upon this Passage, viz. that they imagin'd their Fortrefs to be so impregnable, that, by Way of Contempt, they told *David*, that their very *Blind* and *Lame* would be able to defend it against him and all his Forces: And this is a Sense so extremely plain and obvious, that the renown'd *Bochart* wonders, why any Man of Learning should seek for any other. The only Exception to it is, that these *Blind* and *Lame* (which were rather Objects of Compassion) are said to have been extremely hated by *David*. But we may observe, that *David* here retorts the Sarcasm upon them: The *Lame* and *Blind*, i. e. those who are set to defend the Place, and who, as they pretended, were to be only the *Lame* and the *Blind*. And these were hateful to *David*, because they had wickedly and insolently defy'd the Arms of the living God. *Pool's* Annotations, *Patrick's* and *Le Clerc's* Commentaries.

† *Abibahus* was his primitive Name, but before he enter'd into a League of Amity with *David*, he chang'd it to *Hiram*, that so it might be the standing Name of him and his Successors, as *Pharaoh*, and after that *Ptolemy* in *Egypt*, *Abimelech* among the *Philistines*, and *Cæsar* among the *Roman* Emperors. The Name, in their Language, signifies, *he lives that is exalted*; or, *let him live who is exalted*, i. e. *let the King live for ever*; and his sending to *David* only under this Name, is the true Reason why no other Name is mention'd in Scripture. *Bedford's* Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 4.

† It cannot well be suppos'd, that the *Philistines*, out of their small Territories, could produce such vast Numbers of Men as they brought against the *Israelites*; and therefore the Remark, which *Josephus* makes, helps to explain this Matter, viz. that *Syria* and *Phœnicia*, as well as several other warlike Nations, were engaged in this Confederacy: But this cannot be meant of *Hiram*, who was in a League of the strictest Amity with *David*, but of such *Phœnicians* only as would not submit to him, and therefore join'd with the *Philistines*, first to subdue his Ally, and then to subdue him, before his Government could be settled. *Bedford's* Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 4.



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feat, that, for many Years after, they never pretended to give *Israel* any more Disturbance.

*And brings home the Ark to Jerusalem, but is not allow'd to build a Temple.*

THIS Time of Rest, and publick Security *David* thought a proper Season, where in to bring home the Ark of God (which for almost fifty Years had continu'd in the House of *Abinadab*) into a Place which he had prepar'd for it in his own City. To this Purpose, attended with the † principal Men of the Nation, and the chief Officers of his Court, together with a strong Guard for the Convoy of the Ark, in case any Enemy should attempt to surprize them, he came to *Kirjath-jearim*: But, either through Inadvertency, or Neglect of the (a) Divine Law, which oblig'd them to carry it upon Men's Shoulders, they, in Imitation of the *Philistines*, put it in a Cart, and when the Cart had like to have been overturn'd, *Uzzab*, who was one of its Drivers, taking hold of the Ark to prevent its falling, was immediately

struck dead upon the Spot; so that, *David*, From 2 Sam. i. to xix. terrify'd at this Judgment, durst not at that Time carry it into *Jerusalem*, but left it near the City, in the House of *Obed-Edom*, a *Levite*, whom God blessed with a large Increase of all his Substance, for the little Time that it continu'd with him. In the Space of three Months, the King recollecting that none were to carry the Ark, but the *Levites*, tho' they themselves were expressly forbidden (b) to touch it, he adventur'd to remove it from *Obed-Edom's*, which he did in great Form and Solemnity. The *Levites*, who were to bear the Ark on their Shoulders, he caus'd to be sanctify'd; Himself, cloth'd in a *Linnen Ephod*, and † dancing before it, brought it into a convenient Place, which he had prepar'd for it; offer'd a great Quantity of \* Sacrifices upon this Occasion; and, with the rest of the Company that attended this Solemnity, feasted and rejoic'd.

† H I S

† It is suppos'd by some, that this bringing back of the Ark was appointed to be on one of the three great Festivals; and the Reason, why *David* might summon so many of his principal Ministers and Officers to accompany him in the Expedition, might be, to possess the young People, who perhaps had heard little or nothing of the Ark, by Reason of its having been absent so long, with a mighty Veneration for it, when they saw the King, and so many of the chief Nobility waiting on it, with such a Variety of Musick, and such publick Declarations of Joy. *Millar's History of the Church.*

(a) Numb. iv. 15.

(b) Numb. iv. 15. and xviii. 3.

† *Strabo* tells us, that it was customary among the *Greeks*, as well as other Nations, to use Musick and Dancing in the Processions before their Gods, lib. x. *Callimachus* mentions the *Chori*, and Dancings of the Youth at the Altar of *Apollo*; *Plato* observes, that, among the *Egyptians*, all Kinds of Musick, Songs, and Dances, were consecrated to their Gods, *De Legibus*, lib. iii. And even *Lucian* (*de Saltatione*) expressly says, that among the Ancients, no Ceremony of Religion, no Expiation, no Atonement was accounted rightly accomplish'd without Dancing. So that *David* was far from being singular in his Behaviour upon this Occasion; nor was his Behaviour in this particular any Disparagement to his Regal Dignity. His Dancing, i. e. his moving in certain serious and solemn Measures, suited to Musick of the same Character and Tendency, was an Exercise highly conducive to the Purposes of Piety, and his mixing with the publick Festivities of his People, was a Condescension (as *Tactus* relates of *Augustus* the Roman Emperor) not unbecoming the greatest Monarch. Policy taught *Augustus* to put himself upon a Level with his Subjects, in their publick Rejoicings; Piety taught *David*, that all Men are upon a Level in the Solemnities of Religion. So that *David* was not singular in his Behaviour upon this Occasion. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *The History of the Life of King David*. Vol. II.

\* The Words in the Text are, ——— And it was so, that, when they, that bare the Ark of the Lord, had gone six Paces, he sacrificed Oxen and Fatlings, 2 Sam. vi. 13. From which Words some would infer, that *David*, having measur'd the Ground between *Obed-Edom's* House, and the Place he had built for the Reception of the Ark, had Altars rais'd, at the Distance of every six Paces, whereon he caus'd Sacrifices to be offer'd, as the Ark pass'd by. But it is easy to imagine, what a World of Confusion this would create in the Procession; and therefore the more rational Construction is, that, after those, who carry'd the Ark, had advanc'd six Paces, without any such Token of Divine Wrath as *Uzzab* had undergone, then did they offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving to God, which might consist of several living Creatures, all sacrificed and offer'd up at once. But even supposing, that, at set Distances, there were Sacrifices all along the Way that they went; yet we are to know, that it was no unusual Thing for *Heathens* to confer on their Gods, nay, even upon their Emperors, the same Honours, that we find *David* here bestowing upon the Ark of the God of *Israel*. For in this Manner (as *Suetonius* tells us) was *Otho* receiv'd, cum per omne iter, dextrâ sinistrâque, oppidatim Victimæ caderentur: And the like he relates of *Caligula*: Ut a Misenò movit, inter Altaria, & Victimæ, ardentesque tædas, densissimo obviarum agmine incescit. *Calmet's Commentary.*



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† His Wife *Michal*, who was *Saul's* Daughter, and proud perhaps upon Account of her Pedigree, † upbraided him, upon this Occasion, with his Humility, as a Diminution of his *regal* Dignity; but he, in Reply to the *sarcastick* Manner wherein she spake it, only told her, “ That, “ what he had done was in Honour of “ that God, who had chosen him to govern *Israel*, rather than any of her “ Family; and that such Condescensions “ as these, would never bring him under “ any just Contempt.”

By this Time, the Palace, which *Hiram*, King of *Tyre*, had furnish'd *David* with Men and Materials to build, was finish'd; and, as he was reflecting upon the Meanness of God's Habitation in Comparison of his own, it came into his Mind to build a noble Fabrick for his religious Worship, which Design he communicated to † *Nathan*. *Nathan*, at first, approv'd of it; but, the Night following, he was

commanded to forbid it, with this Assurance, that God accepted of his sincere Intentions; promis'd that his Son should succeed him, and build him a Temple; and that his Posterity should reign † for many Generations.

*DAVID* was a Man of War, and therefore, since God had refus'd him the Privilege of building him a Temple, and had reserv'd that Work for his Son *Solomon* (whose Name denotes *peaceable*) to execute, he thought himself bound to subdue all his Enemies on every Side, that, when his Son came to undertake that great Affair, he might meet with as little Molestation as possible.

IN the Beginning of his Reign, the *Philistines* had twice invaded him, and therefore he began with them. Their royal City of *Gath*, which was call'd *Metbeg-Ammah*, or the *Bridge of Ammah*, (because it stood upon an Hill of that Name, and was a *Bridle* to curb the Tribe of

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

His Victories  
abroad.

† After that, *David* was by *Saul* banish'd from Court, and forc'd to seek for Shelter in foreign Countries: *Saul*, to cast the more Contempt upon him, gave his Wife away to one *Phalti*, (or *Phaltiel*) Son of *Laiß* of *Gallim*; but *David*, when he came to the Crown of *Judah*, had her restor'd to him again; for which Purpose, he sent Messengers to *Ishbosheth*, who then reign'd over the Eleven Tribes at *Mahanaim*, to demand her, and who, according to that Demand, took her from *Phaltiel*, and sent her back to *David*. The *Hebrews* pretend that *Phaltiel* never came near *Michal*, who, in Strictness, could not be his Wife, because she had never been divorc'd by *David*; but others believe, that she had five Sons by *Phaltiel*, which were given up to the *Gibeonites* to be executed, as is related, 2 Sam. xxi. 8, 9. But, in this Place, there seems to be an Error crept into the Text, which should be read *Merob*, instead of *Michal*. *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the Word *Michal*.

† The Words of *Michal*, wherein she upbraids *David*, are these: ——— How glorious was the King of *Israel* to Day, who uncovered himself to Day, in the Eyes of the Handmaids of his Servants, as one of the vain Fellows shamefully uncovereth himself! 2 Sam. vi. 20. At first reading, they seem to intimate, that *David*, in his Dancing, had expos'd his naked Body, and acted, some Way or other, immodestly: But these Words, we are to consider, were spoken in a Fit of Passion, and when *Michal* was minded to aggravate Matters; for it is not to be doubted, but that *David* kept himself within the Bounds of Modesty, how joyous soever he might be. It was a Command which God gave the *Israelites*, that they should rejoice in their Feasts, *Deut.* xii. 7. but then, their Joy was not to be lascivious or petulant, but pious and moderate. In the Case before us, *David* was in the more immediate Presence of God, and about a very sacred Business; and therefore it is incongruous to think, that he would commit any Thing immodest: And, that he could not expose his Nakedness (as his Wife would insinuate) is evident from his having, not only an *Ephod* on, but being clothed with a Robe of fine Linnen, besides his usual Under-garments, 1 *Chron.* xv. 27. and therefore tho' his putting off his Regal Robes might give some Occasion to *Michal's* Expression of his uncovering himself, yet it must be own'd, that this opprobrious Term proceeded from nothing, but the overflowing Spleen of a proud passionate Woman. *Calmet's and Patrick's Commentaries*.

† At what Time this Prophet began to appear in *Israel*, we are no where inform'd. This is the first Time, that the Scripture makes mention of him. He was a Man of great Temper, Prudence, and fine Address, who knew how to mitigate the Rigour of his Reproofs with a great deal of Sweetness and Wisdom, which qualify'd him so well for the Conversation of Kings, and other great Persons. He was always equally esteem'd, and lov'd by *David*, and, in his Conduct towards him, maintain'd a just Medium, between an inflexible Austerity, and a servile Flattery. *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The Words in the Text are, ——— I will establish the Throne of his Kingdom for ever; which, in their primary Sense, do relate to the terrestrial Kingdom of *David's* Family, and the long Duration of it, enough to justify the Expression *for ever*, taken in a less strict Signification: But if we take it in a more sublime and absolute Sense, it can belong to none, but that Son of *David*, to whom God the Father gave an eternal Kingdom (properly so called) over all Things both in Heaven and Earth, which, tho' it was not so well known in the Times, when this Prophecy was utter'd, was, by the Event afterwards, made plain and evident. *Le Clerc's Commentary*.



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of *Judah*, and keep them in Obedience) he took, and made it a Barrier against themselves. The *Moabites* he utterly subdu'd; and, having dismantled all their strong Places, he † slew the greater Part of them; reserving such only, as were requisite to till the Ground. From hence he march'd his Army to secure his Territories, which border'd upon the *Euphrates*. The *Syrians* of *Zobah*, under the Command of † *Hadadexer*, came with a strong Force, and gave him Battle; but he soon routed them, and, besides a great Number of Foot-Prisoners, took a thousand Chariots, and seven thousand Horsemen that attended them; but, reserving to himself no more Horses, than were necessary for an hundred Chariots, the rest he ham-string'd, to make them unserviceable for War. † The *Syrians* of *Damascus*, hearing of *Hadadexer's* ill Success, came to his Assistance: But *David* put

them to the Rout likewise, and, having slain two and twenty Thousand of them, he became Master of their Country; put Garrisons into their fortify'd Cities, and made them *Tributary*; and (what was another Victory in this Expedition) in his Return from *Syria*, he engag'd a great Body of *Edomites* † in the *Valley of Salt*; slew eighteen Thousand of them, and brought them under the like Subjection.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

Thus loaded with Honours and Spoils *David* return'd from this Campaign; but all the rich Materials, that he had compil'd together, viz. Gold, Silver, and Brass, he dedicated to the Lord, or laid them up for the future Use of the Temple: And (what was no small Addition to his Store) *Toi*, the King of *Hamah*, hearing of his Victories, sent his own Son to congratulate him thereupon, and, in a large Present of Vessels of Gold, and Vessels of Silver, &c. to acknowledge his Kindness in break-

ing

† There is no small Obscurity in the Words of the Text, which are these: ——— *He smote Moab, and measured them with a Line, casting them down to the Ground; even in two Lines measured he to put to Death, and with one Line to keep alive*: Which Words seem to allude to a Custom among the Kings of the East, when they were thoroughly incens'd against any Nation, viz. to make the Captives all come together in one Place, and prostrate themselves upon the Ground; that, being divided into two Parts, as it were with a Line, their Conqueror might appoint which Part he pleas'd, either for Death, or Life, which was sometimes determin'd by casting of Lots. Some are of Opinion that *David* made three Lots, or Parts of these *Moabites*, two of which he order'd to be slain, and one Part only to be kept alive. The Reason of this his Severity against these miserable People, the *Rabbins* assure us, was, because they had slain his Parents, and Brethren, whom he had committed to the Custody of the King of *Moab*, during his Exile. But of the Reality of this *Motive*, there is no Manner of Appearance; and since this Execution, which *David* inflicted, may relate either to the whole Nation, or the Army only, to clear *David* from the Imputation of too much Cruelty, we should rather conceive it of the Third, or Half Part at most of the Army. *Le Clerc's* and *Calmet's* Commentaries.

† In the Fragment of *Nicholaus Damascenus*, which *Josephus* has preserv'd, this Prince is simply called *Adad*, which was the common Name of the Kings of *Syria*, who, according to the Manner of other eastern Princes, took their Titles from the celestial Bodies, and, in their Language, *Adad* signifies the Sun. The Fragment, recorded by *Josephus*, is to this Effect: ——— *A long Time after, one Adad, a valiant Man, and a Native of the Place, had the Command of Damascus and Syria, Phœnicia only excepted. There happened to be a War between the same Adad, and David, the King of the Jews, and several Encounters between them; but, in the End, Adad was overcome at Euphrates, behaving himself with the Resolution of a brave Prince, and a great Captain. The same Author, speaking farther of his Posterity, says, ——— That the Government was handed down, from Father to Son, to the Tenth Generation, and that the Successor still received the Father's Name with the Empire, as the Ptolemies did among the Egyptians.* *Jewish Antiq.* Lib. vii. c. 6.

† *Aram Damasek*, which we translate *Syria of Damascus*, was that Part of *Syria*, which lay between *Libanus* and *Antilibanus*, whose chief City was *Damascus*, situate in a Valley, called by several Names in Scripture, and water'd by five Rivers, the two principal of which, viz. *Abana* and *Pharpar* (mention'd in 2 Kings v. 12.) descended from Mount *Hermion*; whereof the latter wash'd the Walls of *Damascus*, and the other ran through it, and divided the City into two Parts. *Patrick's* Commentary.

† The *Valley of Salt* here is thought by many to be the Places adjoining to the *Dead-Sea*: But, as the Country of the *Edomites*, whom *David* subdu'd in his Return from his Expedition into *Syria*, must necessarily lie towards the East of *Canaan*, we must look for some other *Valley of Salt* in the Confines of that Country. Now, about a League southward from the City of *Palmyra*, or *Thadmor*, in the Road to *Edom*, we find a large Plain, abounding with Salt-Pits, whence a great Part of *Syria* is furnish'd with that Commodity; and therefore 'tis very probable, that the Battle between *David's* Generals, and the *Edomites*, was fought in this Plain; which is about two Days Journey from *Bozrah*, the capital City of the eastern *Edom*, whence the People might march out to meet *David's* Forces, and oppose them in their Return home. *Calmet's* Commentary.



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And chief Mi-  
nisters at home.

ing the Power of his most inveterate Enemies.

ALL the while that *David* was thus engag'd in foreign Wars, he took Care to have Justice administer'd to his Subjects at home, and had a certain Number of very great Men employ'd in the highest Offices of Trust. *Joab* (as we said before) was Captain-General; *Jebosaphat* † Chancellor of the Kingdom; *Abiathar* was High-Priest; *Sezaiab*, Secretary of State; *Benaiah*, † Captain of his Guard; and his own Sons, the prime Ministers of his Household, such as Lord Chamberlain, Lord Treasurer, Lord Steward, as we call them; and to these he added one more, *Mephibosheth*, the Son of *Jonathan*, to whom he restor'd all his Grandfather *Saul's* Estate; and, tho' he was a Cripple,

† and lame of both his Feet, yet, (for the Love he had for his Father) he entertain'd him with great Kindness, and order'd him to sit with his own Sons at the royal Table every Day.

*DAVID*, not long after this, hearing that his † old Friend *Nabash* was dead, sent his Compliments of Condolence to his Son and Successor *Hanun*; but the great Men that were about the young King, made him believe, that the sole Intent of *David's* sending this Embassy was to spy out the Weakness of the City, and in what Place it might most advantageously be assaulted: So that the too credulous Prince order'd the Ambassadors to be treated in the most ignominious Manner, and, with \* their Beards half-shav'd, and their Clothes cut short even to the Middle of

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.  
His subduing  
the Ammo-  
nites, and their  
Confederates.

\* their

† The Word, in our Translation, is *Recorder*, which, in the Marginal Note, is *Remembrancer*, or *Writer of Chronicles*; an Employment of no mean Estimation in the Eastern World, where it was customary with Kings to keep daily Registers of all the Transactions of their Reigns; and a Trust, which whoever discharg'd to Purpose, must be let into the true Springs, and Secrets of Action, and consequently, must be receiv'd into the inmost Confidence. For whether the Office of a Lord Chancellor, was consistent with the Constitution of the Jewish State, a modern Author seems to doubt. History of the Life of King *David*, Vol. II.

† These Guards are called in the Text the *Cerethites*, and the *Peletites*, but who they were, is variously conjectur'd. That they were Soldiers, is evident, from their being mention'd as present at the Proclamation of King *Solomon* against *Adonijah*, which could not conveniently have been done without some arm'd Force, to protect the Persons, that proclaim'd him: And that they were not common Soldiers, but the constant Guards of *David's* Person, is manifest from the Title of Σωματοφύλακες, *Keepers of the Body*, which *Josephus* gives them. Some are of Opinion, that they were Men of a gigantick Stature; but we find no Ground for that, tho' they were doubtless proper and robust Men, (as we speak) and of known Fidelity to their Prince, 2 Sam. xv. 18. and xx. 7. Others again think, that they were *Philistines*; but it is hardly supposable, that *David* would have any of these hated, uncircumcis'd People to be his Body-Guard; neither can we believe, that the *Israelitish* Soldiers would have took it patiently, to see Foreigners of that Nation put in such Places of Honour and Trust. *Cerethite* however, is certainly but another Name for *Philistine*, as appears from *Zephaniah* ii. 5. and therefore the Question is, how came any of *David's* Subjects to be called after that Name? And the Answer to this is obvious. — They were so called, because they went at first with him into *Philistia*, and continu'd there with him all the Time, that he was under the Protection of *Achish*. These were the Persons, who accompany'd him from the Beginning, in his utmost Distress, and clave to him in all Calamities; and therefore it is no Wonder, if Men of such approv'd Fidelity were made Choice of for his Body-Guard; nor is it any uncommon Thing in History, for Legions, or Bands of Soldiers to take their Names, not from the Place of their Nativity, but their Residence, and very frequently from the Name of their Captain, or Commander. Since therefore, in 1 Chron. xii. 3. we find mention made of one *Pelet*, the Son of *Azmaveth*, who resorted to *David*, while he was at *Ziklag*, but still under the Protection of *Achish*; 'tis but supposing him to be their Captain, and then we come to the Reason, why they were called *Peletites*, unless we suppose them rather denominated from *Pelet*, Son of *Jonathan*, who was of the King's own Tribe. Patrick's Commentary, Pool's Annotations, and The History of the Life of King *David*.

† *Mephibosheth* was very young, when his Father *Jonathan* was killed at the Battle of *Gilboa*, which put his Nurse into so great a Consternation, that she let the Child fall, as she was making haste to escape with him, and from that Time, he was lame of both Feet ever after, 2 Sam. iv. 4.

† What the particular Benefits which *David* had receiv'd from *Nabash* were, we are no where told in Scripture; but some of the Jews say, that he fled to him, when he durst stay no longer with *Achish* King of the *Philistines*, and that he receiv'd him very kindly; others, that he entertain'd his Relations, when the King of *Moab*, to whom he had committed them, slew some of them: But the most likely Opinion is, that, as he was a bitter Enemy to *Saul*, who had given him a great Overthrow, he, for that very Reason, became a Friend to *David*, when he perceiv'd how *Saul* persecuted him, and thereupon might send him Relief and Assistance, and perhaps offer him Protection in his Kingdom. Patrick's Commentary.

\* This was one of the greatest Indignities that the Malice of Man could invent, in those Countries, where all People



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their Buttocks, to be sent about their Business.

THE Ambassadors being ashamed to return home, were ordered to continue at *Jericho*, until their Beards grew again; but, as for the Indignity put upon them, *David* gave them Assurance, that he would resent it in a proper Manner. Accordingly he sent an Army under the Command of *Joab*, to call these inhospitable *Ammonites* to an Account. The *Ammonites* were apprized of his Design, and therefore provided against the worst, by procuring three and thirty thousand *Mercenaries* of the *Syrians*, who lay encamped at some Distance in the Fields, whilst their own Forces covered the City.

UPON this Situation of the Enemy, *Joab* divided his Army into two Bodies, one of which he gave to his Brother *Abishai*, to keep the *Ammonites* in Play, while himself with the other, which consisted of his choice Men, attacked the *Syrians*. Their Agreement was to relieve each other, in case there was Occasion: But *Joab*, at the first Onset, charged the *Syrians* so home, that, as they were but *Mercenaries*, and thought not the Cause their own, they soon gave Way, which made the *Ammonites*, who depended much upon their Courage, endeavour to secure themselves by retreating into their City; for the Season of the Year being too far advanced, made it impracticable for *Joab* to besiege it.

*HADAD EZER* had assisted the

*Ammonites* with some Forces the last Campaign; and being apprehensive, that *David* would fall foul upon him, he resolved to be beforehand with him. To this Purpose levying a vast Army, not only in *Syria*, but in *Mesopotamia* likewise, he sent it, under the Command of *Shobach* his General over the River *Euphrates*, as far as *Helam*, a Town in the Borders of the half Tribe of *Manasseh*. This *David* had soon Intelligence of, and therefore uniting all his Forces, he marched with the utmost Expedition, and coming upon the Enemy sooner than was expected, slew seven thousand Men, who attended seven hundred Chariots; which so disheartened the rest, that he soon dispatched forty Thousand more, together with their General, who fell in the Action, and died upon the Spot. Upon this Success, several petty Kings, who had assisted *Hadad-ezer* in this Expedition, fearing some worse Consequences, made a Peace with *David*, and became Tributary to him; and even *Hadad-ezer* himself, being thus forsaken by his Confederates, gave him Assurance that he would no longer espouse the Cause of the *Ammonites*, but leave them to shift for themselves: Whereupon *David* sent *Joab* against them with a powerful Army, who laid the Country waste, destroyed all that came in his Way, and (to make short of the Matter) laid Siege to their royal City of *Rabbah*.

WHILE *Joab* was carrying on the Siege of *Rabbah*, *David* continued in *Jerusalem*, and walking one Evening † on the Top

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

His falling in  
Love with  
Bathsheba,  
and murder-  
ing her Hus-  
band Uriah.

People thought their Hair so great an Ornament, that some would have rather submitted to die, than part with it. What a foul Disgrace, and heavy Punishment this was accounted in ancient Times, we may learn from *Nicholaus Damascenus*, as mentioned by *Stobaeus* (Tit. 42.) who says, that among the *Indians*, the King commanded the greatest Offenders to be shaven, as the heaviest Punishment that he could inflict upon them; and, to the like Purpose, *Plutarch* (in *Agesil.*) tells us, that, whenever a Soldier, among the *Lacedemonians*, was convicted of Cowardice, he was obliged to go with one Part of his upper Lip shaved, and the other not. Nay, even at this Day, no greater Indignity can be offered to a Man of *Persia*, than to cause his Beard to be shaved; and therefore, *Tavernier*, in his Travels, relates the Story, that when the *Sophi* caused an Ambassador of *Aureng-zebe* to be used in this Manner, telling him, that he was not worthy to wear a Beard, the Emperor (even in the Manner as *David* here did) most highly resented the Affront, that was done to him in the Person of his Ambassador. And, as shaving *David's* Ambassadors was deservedly accounted a grievous Affront, so the cutting off half the Beard (which made them look still more ridiculous) was a great Addition to it, where Beards were held in great Veneration; and, where long Habits down to the Heels were worn (especially by Persons of Distinction) without any Breeches or Drawers, the cutting their Garments, even to the Middle, thereby to expose their Nakedness, was such a brutal and shameful Insult, as would badly become a Man of *David's* martial Spirit, and just Sentiments of Honour, to have tamely passed by. *Patrick's* and *Calmer's* Commentaries.

† The Manner of Building, in all eastern Countries, was to have their Houses flat-roofed, with a Terrace, and Parapet



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of his *Palace* to take the fresh Air, he chanc'd to \* espy a beauteous Woman bathing herself in her Garden. The unguarded King, as soon as he saw her, was smitten; and, enquiring who she was, was inform'd, that she was *Bathsheba*, the Daughter of *Ammiel*, and Wife of *Uriah* † the *Hittite*, an Officer in his Army, who was then with *Joab* at the Siege of *Rabbah*. *David* sent for her, lay with her, and dismiss'd her: But, in a short Time, finding herself with Child, she appriz'd him of it, and desir'd him withal to consult her Honour and Safety in devising some Means to conceal it. Hereupon he sent a Dispatch to *Joab* for *Uriah* to come to him, as if he had something particular to enquire of him; but his whole Intent was to give him an Opportunity of lying with his Wife, that so the Child, when it was born, might be reputed his. *Uriah* came; and after the King had ask'd him some few Questions

concerning the Condition of the Army, and the Advances of the Siege, he order'd him to go home, † and refresh himself after his Journey, and sent an handsome *Collation* after him for his Entertainment: But so it was, that, instead of going near his Wife, he chose to sleep in the *Guard-Room*. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

*DAVID* was inform'd of this the next Morning; and was therefore resolv'd to make use of another Expedient. He invited him to sup at his own Table, and prevail'd with him to drink to such a Pitch, that he did not doubt but that the *Heat* of the Liquor would have inflam'd his *Appetite*, and made him go home to his Wife; but still he lay in the *Guard-Room*, and, in Excuse to the King, said, that he thought it was his Duty so to do, while the rest of the Soldiers were encamp'd: So that, finding himself still disappointed, the King order'd him at last back to the Army, and \* sent with him Letters

*Parapet Wall*, for the Convenience of walking in the cool Air; and, as *David's* Palace was built on one of the highest Places of Mount *Sion*, he might easily look down upon the lower Parts of the Town, and take a View of all the Gardens, that were within a due Distance. *Le Clerc's* Commentary.

\* Thus *Jupiter* is said to have seen *Proserpina* washing herself, and exposing her whole Body to his View, which inflam'd his Lust after her:

Λομμένῃς ὄλον εἶδ' ἐδέρκετο Περσεφονείης.

But whether it was in her Garden, or Court-Yard, overlook'd by the Palace, or in some Apartment in her House, whose Windows open'd that Way, that this Woman bath'd herself, is not so certain. Tradition points out the Place of a Fountain still called after her Name, which would make it probable, that she bath'd in a Garden, did not *Josephus* expressly declare, that it was in her own House, as indeed the natural Modesty and Decency of her Sex, as well as the Circumstance of the Time (for then it was *Evening*) make his Account more probable; nor can it be doubted, but that the declining Rays of the Sun, shooting into the inmost Recesses of her Chamber, and throwing a great Lustre around her, might discover her very clearly to very distant Eyes, without the least Suspicion, on her Part, of any Possibility of being seen, and, consequently, with all the Reserve of Modesty proper to her Sex. *The History of the Life of King David*, Vol. III.

† *Uriah*, though an *Hittite* by Nation, was proselyted to the Jewish Religion, and so, marrying with a Jewish Woman, liv'd in *Jerusalem*; or, as he was one of the King's *Life-Guard*, which, for Reasons above-mention'd, seem to have been all *Natives*, and of the Tribe of *Judah*, this additional Name might perhaps be given him, for some gallant Action achiev'd against the *Hittites*, in the same Manner as a *Roman*, in After-Ages, came to be called *Africanus*, *Germanicus*, *Parthicus*, &c. upon Account of Victories obtain'd over the *Africans*, *Germans*, or *Parthians*. *Calmet's* Commentary.

† The Words in the Text are, — Go down to thy House, and wash thy Feet, 2 Sam. xi. 8. for in these Countries, where it was not the Custom to wear Shoes, but Sandals only, and, in some Places, to go bare-foot, washing the Feet was a great Refreshment after a Journey, and a common Compliment, that the Master of the House usually made to any Stranger at his first Entrance. But this Custom of washing the Feet, was not only after a Journey, to cleanse them from Dirt and Dust, but very much us'd likewise, before People set down to Meat; and therefore *David's* Meaning in the Expression, is, that *Uriah* should go down, and feast with his Wife (for which Reason he sent a *Collation* to his House) and, after so long an Absence, indulge himself in her Company. For *David's* Intention hitherto was, neither to murder *Uriah*, nor marry his Wife, but only to screen her Honour, and his own Crime. *Calmet's* Commentary.

\* It may be thought perhaps, that *Uriah* suspected something of his Wife's Adultery, and therefore, resolving that it should be discover'd, would not be perswaded to go down to his House: But if he did, he certainly acted the Part of a trully Servant, when he would not open the King's Letter to know what was in it, though, upon Supposition that he suspected his criminal Commerce with his Wife, he had Reason to expect no Good. This puts one naturally



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Letters to *Joab*, wherein he commanded him to manage Matters so, that *Uriah* might be kill'd by the *Ammonites*, which accordingly came to pass: For, in an Assault upon the Town, *Uriah*, being deserted by the other Soldiers, who had private Orders to retire when the Onset began, \* fell immediately by the Enemies Sword.

His taking of  
Rabbah, and  
cruelly using it.

As soon as *Uriah* was dead, *Joab* sent an Express thereof to the King, who return'd him Orders to carry on the Siege with more Vigour, until he had made himself Master of it; and then to raze it even with the Ground, and to put all the Inhabitants to the Sword, without sparing so much as one Man. Upon this Order, *Joab* advanc'd his Approaches, and renew'd his Assaults every Day, until he had got Possession of \* the *Water-Works*,

which supply'd the Town; and then sent a Courier to acquaint the King, that the City was reduc'd to the utmost Extremity; was in no Condition to hold out much longer, and therefore he desir'd him to come *in Person*, that he might have the Honour of taking it. The King, according to his *General's* Desire, went with a strong Re-inforcement, took the Place by Storm, gave the Plunder of it to his Soldiers, but reserv'd to himself what belong'd to the King, among which was the Crown of inestimable Value. Having thus wasted the City, and divided the Spoil, he put the Men, who had held it out against him, to the most exquisite Torments; and other Places, that would not immediately surrender, he treated with the same Severity.

UPON the Death of *Uriah*, his Wife \* *Bathsheba* pretended to mourn for him;

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.  
Nathan re-  
proves him,  
and threatens  
God's Punish-  
ments upon him  
for his Sins,  
which accord-  
ingly were exe-  
cuted.

naturally in Mind of the Story of *Bellerophon's* carrying Letters from *Prætus* to his Father-in-law *Jobates*, King of *Lycia*, with an Order to kill him; from whom it came into a Proverb, to carry *Bellerophon's* Letters, or a Death-Warrant against one's self, according to that Passage in *Plautus*:

Aha! *Bellerophonem* jam tuus me fecit Filius,  
Egomet *Tabellas* detuli ut vincirer. *Bacchid.*

For the Fate of *Uriah* and *Bellerophon* are so very much alike, that the Fable of the latter seems to be founded upon the Story of the former. *Bellerophon*, who, as some *Scholiasts* think, should be read *Boulepheron* (a Council-Carrier) was a Stranger at the Court of *Prætus*, as *Uriah* (being an *Hittite*) was at the Court of *David*. He declin'd the Embraces of *Sthenobæa*, as *Uriah* did the Bed of *Bathsheba*; and was, for that Reason, sent to *Jobates*, General of *Prætus's* Army, with Letters, which contain'd a Direction to put him to Death, as *Uriah* was sent to *Joab*, *David's* General. By *Jobates* he was sent, with a small Guard, upon an Attack, in which it was intended he should be slain, as *Uriah* was by *Joab*, to that, in which he fell. The main of the History is the same in both; the Similitude of *Jobates* and *Joab's* Name is very remarkable; and the Variation in the whole only lies in some such Ornamental Embellishments, as might well be expected in a Poetical Composition. *Calmet's* Commentary, and The History of the Life of King *David*.

\* The Fate and Fall of the gallant *Uriah* is thus related by *Josephus*: — “ *Joab* put *Uriah* upon a desperate Forlorn, and, to cover his Design, gave him several brave Men to back him, with a Promise to support him with the whole Army, in Case there were any Possibility of entering the Town; and, at the same Time, recommended it earnestly to him, to maintain the Reputation he had already acquir'd with the King and the Army, by quitting himself gallantly upon this Occasion. *Uriah*, with great Cheerfulness, undertook the Post, while *Joab* gave his Companions private Orders to withdraw, and leave him, as soon as they found themselves in Danger. The *Hebrews* press'd hard upon the Wall, and put the *Ammonites* under a dreadful Apprehension, that they would force the Town; whereupon the Besieg'd threw open their Gates, and made a desperate Sally, which was as good as a Signal to those, that were with *Uriah*, to abandon him; which accordingly they did, and left him to be cut to Pieces. He did all the Execution, that was possible to be done by one single Man against Numbers, and, after several Wounds receiv'd, fell, like a Man of Honour, with his Face to the Enemy.” *Jewish Antiq.* lib. vii. c. 7.

\* Some learned Men are of Opinion, that this royal City of *Rabbah* was likewise called the City of *Waters*, either because it stood upon a River, or was encompass'd with Water both for its Defence and Delight. But *Junius* renders it, that he cut off the *Waters*, which supply'd the Town; which Translation not only *Josephus* seems to favour, by telling us, that *Joab* seiz'd on all the *Aqueducts* which led into the City; but *Polybius* (lib. v.) likewise, speaking of the Siege of this same Place by *Antiochus*, relates the Story, how a certain *Defender* discover'd to that Prince a subterraneous Passage, through which the Besieg'd came to draw Water, which *Antiochus* stopp'd up, and, by Reason of their Thirst, compell'd them to surrender. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

\* How long Widows were to mourn for their Husbands, there is no express Precept in the Law; but the usual Time for common Mourners was no more than seven Days; and we cannot suppose that *Bathsheba* was much longer, considering the Reason we have to apply to her the Words of *Lucan*:

————— *Lacrymas non sponte cadentes*  
*Effudit, gemitusque expressit pectore læto.*



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1055, &c.

but it was not long before *David* sent for her, † and declar'd her his Wife: And in this State he continu'd without any Molestation, or Apprehension of having done wrong for the Space of several Months, till at length God sent † *Nathan* the Prophet to rouse him out of his *adulterous* Lethargy, and, by \* an elegant *Parable*,

to represent the Baseness and Wickedness of what he had done, and to make him pronounce Sentence against his guilty self. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

*DAVID* accordingly condemns himself, and confesses his Guilt, and humbly begs Pardon for what he had done: Whereupon *Nathan* was sent again to inform him, that † God had pardon'd his Transgression,

† According to the *Jewish* Doctors, it was utterly unlawful for any to marry another Man's Wife, in Case he had defil'd her before. The *canonical* Law declares such Marriages null and void, as are contracted between an adulterous Man, and a Woman, that was Partner with him in the Crime; and, tho' the Law of *Moses* does not expressly forbid them, yet we may not thence infer, that they were permitted among the *Jews*. For these Reasons, some have thought, that this Marriage of *David* and *Bathsheba* was null and invalid; but others, upon better Grounds, have suppos'd, that, though there were many criminal Circumstances attending it, yet these did not vacate its Effect, and, in short, though it ought not to have been done, yet, being done, the Marriage was good, and the Children, which were afterwards born, were legitimate. *Calmet's* and *Patrick's* Commentaries.

† We learn little more of this great Man in the sacred Writings, but that he was *David's* Prophet, intimate Counsellor, and Historiographer. *Josephus* says of him, that he was a *polite* and a *prudent* Man, one, who knew how to temper the Severity of Wisdom, with Sweetness of Manners. And *Grotius* compares him to *Manius Lepidus*, of whom *Tacitus* says, that he had a Talent of turning away *Tiberius's* Mind from those cruel Purposes, to which the vile Flattery of others inclin'd him, and was, at the same Time, in equal Favour and Authority with him. *Nathan*, certainly knew the Art of reproving Kings with Authority, and yet, without giving Offence. So far from that, he grew in his Prince's Favour and Estimation, as long as he liv'd; *inasmuch*, that *David* (as *Tradition* tells us) called one Son after his Name, and committed another (even his belov'd *Solomon*) to his Care and Tuition. The History of the Life of King *David*, Vol. III.

\* There is a Passage of *Seneca*, (Epist. 59.) where he treats of the Style fit for philosophick Writing, which suits so well with this Parable of *Nathan's*, that I chuse to give it in his own Words, as a fit Preamble to the short Comment, which follows, of it. *Invenio, inquit Imagines, quibus si quis nobis uti velit, & Poetis illas solis judicat esse concessas, neminem mihi videtur ex antiquis legisse, apud quos nondum captabatur plausibilis Oratio. Illi, qui simpliciter, & demonstrande Res causâ loquebantur, Parabolis referti sunt, quas existimo necessarias, non ex eadem Causâ, quâ Poëtis, sed ut Imbecillitatis nostræ adminicula sint, & ut discitem & audientem in rem presentem adducant*: For Parables, like Histories, wherein we have no Concern, are heard with more Attention, and are so contriv'd, as to give no Offence, even tho' they provoke the Man, to whom they are address'd, to condemn himself. *There were two Men in one City, the one rich, and the other poor; And the rich Man had exceeding many Flocks and Herds; as David had many Wives and Concubines, with whom he might have well been satisfy'd, without violating another Man's Bed; but the poor Man had nothing, save one little Ewe Lamb, which he had bought and nourish'd up. Bathsheba, very likely, was the only Wife that Uriah had, with whom he was highly pleas'd and delighted, and she very probably with him, until David's Temptations had perverted her Mind. And it grew up together with him, and with his Children; it did eat of his own Meat, and drink of his own Cup, and lay in his Bosom, and was unto him as a Daughter. Nathan, in his Resemblance, cannot be said to have surpass'd the Truth, considering how fond many Persons were anciently, not only of Lamb, but of several other Creatures, which they suffer'd to eat with them at their Tables, and lie with them in their Beds; and that even at this Day it is a Custom in Arabia, (which is contiguous to Judæa) to have one of the finest Lambs in the Flock brought up in the House, and fed with the Children. And there came a Traveller to the rich Man: This denotes David's straggling Appetite, which he suffer'd to wander from his own home, and to cover another Man's Wife: And of this Appetite the Jewish Doctors have this Observation, that "In the Beginning it is but a Traveller, but in Time it becomes a Guest, and in Conclusion is the Master of the House." And he spared to take of his own Flock, and his own Herds, wherewith he might have satisfy'd his Appetite, but took the poor Man's Lamb, and dress'd it for the way-faring Man, that was come to him. Most Commentators here take Notice, that Nathan did not go so far in the Parable, as to say any Thing of the rich Man's killing the poor Man. This certainly would have made the Resemblance more compleat, but it is therefore omitted, that David might not so readily apprehend Nathan's Meaning, and so be induc'd unawares to pronounce a Sentence of Condemnation upon himself; whereupon the Prophet had a fair Opportunity to shew him, that, if the rich Man, who took away the poor Man's Lamb, deserv'd Death, according to his own Judgment, how much more did he deserve it, who had not only taken another Man's Wife, but caus'd him to be slain likewise by the Enemies of Israel. Patrick's Commentary.*

† It may very well be ask'd, how God so readily came to forgive *David*, when he acknowledg'd his Transgression, and yet did not forgive *Saul*, tho' he made the like Confession, *I have sinned*? But the Answer is obvious, that, be the Form of Expression what it will, unless it proceeds from the Sincerity of the Heart, the great Searcher of Hearts will not regard it. The true Reason therefore, why *Saul* could not obtain a Revocation of his Sentence of Rejection, was, because his Repentance was not sincere: it did not proceed from an humble and contrite Spirit. At the same Time that he acknowledg'd his Sin, he desir'd *Samuel* to honour him before the People, and persisted in his Disobedience ever after: Whereas *David*, on the contrary, humbled himself, wept, and lamented for his Sin, and of his Penitence

has



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

Transgression, viz. the eternal Punishment due to his Transgression God had remitted, but the \* *temporal* should be inflicted on him: That therefore the Son (for by this Time *Bathsheba* was brought to-bed of a Son) begotten in this *adulterous* Congress, should not live; that several of his Family should come to an untimely Death; that some one of his Sons should rise up in Rebellion against him; and his

own Wives be defil'd publicly, and in the Sight of all the World, because he had given such Scandal to his own People, and † such Occasion to the Enemies of God to *blaspheme*.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

NOR was it long before Part of this Sentence began to be executed upon him: For the Child, which he had by *Bathsheba*, was taken sick and died. While it was sick, \* *David* fasted and pray'd, if

has left us a perpetual and eternal Monument in *Psalms* li. *Have Mercy upon me, O God, after thy great Goodness; according to the Multitude of thy Mercies, do away mine Offences, wash me thoroughly from my Wickedness, and cleanse me from my Sin, &c.*

\* In the Threats, which God orders *Nathan* to denounce against *David*, the Expressions are, ——— *I will raise up Evil against thee out of thine own House, and I will take thy Wives before thine Eyes, and give them unto thy Neighbour, and he shall lie with thy Wives in the Sight of the Sun; but thou didst it secretly, but I will do this Thing before all Israel, and before the Sun, 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12.* Where the Words, *I will raise up, I will take, I will do*, do not denote any positive Actions of God, as if he prompted wicked Men to do the same Things, wherewith he threatens *David*, insomuch that, without such prompting, they would not have done them, but by it were necessitated to do them: Such a Construction as this is injurious to the Divine Attributes, and makes God the Author of Evil. But the true Meaning is, ——— That God, at that Time, saw the perverse Disposition of one of his Sons, and the crafty Wiliness of one of his Counsellors, which, without restraining them, would not fail to create *David* no small Uneasiness: And therefore, because *David* had violated his Law, and, to gratify his Lust, had committed both Adultery and Murther, God would not interpose, but suffer'd the Tempers of these two wicked Persons to follow their own Course, and have their natural Swing; whereupon the one, being ambitious of a Crown, endeavours to depose his Father, and the other, willing to make the Breach irreparable, advis'd the most detested Thing he could think of. This indeed was the very Thing that God had foretold, but, without any Imputation upon his Attributes, we may say, that God can so dispose and guide a Train of Circumstances, that the Wickedness of any Action shall happen in this Manner rather than another, tho' he do not infuse into any Man the *Will* to do wickedly. *Torrenti nequitiae, ut sic loquar*, (for I give you the Commentator's own Words, because there is something very accurate in them) *nullas vires addit, sed impedit, ne hac, potius quam illac, perumpat; circumstantiasque omnes (quæ nihil vitii in se habent) ita dirigit, & moderatur, ut certum quendam eventum consequantur. Sunt autem innumera ejusmodi circumstantiae, quibus nihil inest mali, & quibus tamen res, pro Dei arbitrio, variantur; deoque sunt non pauciores viae, quibus omnia regat, sine ullâ virtutum suarum imminutione, & ita, ut libertatem interea peccandi aut parendi hominibus relinquat.* So that from such Scripture-Phrases as these, we may not infer, that God either does, or can do Evil, but only, that he permits that Evil to be done, which he foreknew would be done, but might have prevented, had he pleas'd; or, in other Terms, that he suffers Men, naturally wicked, to follow the *Bent* of their Tempers, without any Interposition of his Providence to restrain them. *Le Clerc's Commentary.*

† *David's* Crime, which at first was secret, was in Time discover'd, and the Report of it carry'd to the neighbouring Nations. The *Syrians*, the *Ammonites*, the *Moabites*, the *Edomites*, the *Philistines*, People whom he had subdu'd, and who, out of pure Malice, had always a jealous Eye upon his Conduct, would not fail upon this Occasion to murmur, and say, "How could God thus favour an Adulterer and Murtherer? Where is his Justice, and his Providence? Is this the God, who is said to be so equitable in his Dealings with Men, and so severe an Avenger of Iniquity, and yet makes Choice of such a Monster as this to govern his People? 'This is the *David*, the Man after God's own Heart, whom he prefer'd before *Saul*, on whom he hath pour'd down innumerable Blessings, and for whom he hath many rich Promises in Reserve; and yet did *Saul* ever commit such horrid Enormities as this Man has done, and still continues to be the Favourite of God?" Such Reflections (we may reasonably imagine) would *David's* Transgressions have occasion'd among Strangers, and Enemies, who might thence be induc'd to despise a Religion they were acquainted with, and which he, who should have been its main Support, so little regarded. *Calmet's Commentary.*

\* *David's* Acts of Humiliation for his Sins are thus describ'd by *Salvian (de Gubern. Dei)* "He put off his Purple, threw away his Royal Ornaments, laid down his Diadem, wholly stripp'd himself of his Kingship, and appear'd as a Penitent, in a squalid, rueful Garb, fasting, lying on the Ground, confessing, mourning, repenting, deprecating, &c. and yet, with all his Humiliation and Compunction, he could not obtain a Revocation of this Punishment." But why should the Death of this Child, who, had he liv'd, would have been a perpetual Monument of Guilt, and a Brand of Infamy upon his Parents be accounted by *David* so great a Punishment? The true Way to account for this, is to ascribe it to *David's* Excess of Passion for *Bathsheba*, which so strongly attach'd him to every Offspring of her's, and made him forget every Thing in this Child, but that Motive of Endearment. Besides this, there is something in human Nature, which prompts us to rate Things after a Manner seemingly unaccountable; and to estimate them, not according to their real Worth, but according to the Expence or Trouble, or even the Distress they cost us. Nor

should



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

Solomon is  
born.

if possibly he might appease the divine Wrath, and intercede for its Life; but when it was dead, he acknowledg'd the Justice of God, and, cheerfully submitting to his Will, made his ardent Supplications to him, that the Remainder of his Afflictions might be mixed with Mercy. This in some Measure was done; for, in a proper Space of Time, he had another Son † by *Bathsheba*, who was nam'd † *Solomon*, in Confidence of the Promise which God had made; that his Reign should be crown'd with *Peace*: But this did not hinder the Divine Justice from being true to its *Threats*, as well as its *Promises*.

*DAVID* had several Sons, but only one Daughter that we read of, whose Name was *Tamar*, (Sister to *Absalom*, by *Maacha*, the Daughter of *Talmai* King of † *Geshur*) a Princess of excellent Beauty, and with whom *Amnon*, his eldest Son by another Queen, fell desperately in Love, and pin'd away with an † hopeless Desire of obtaining her; till at Length, by the Advice and Contrivance of *Jonadab*, his intimate Friend, and † *Cousin-german*, he found Means to decoy her into his Apartment, where, † notwithstanding all her Intreaties and Expostulations with him, he first ravish'd her, and, when his brutish Passion was satisfy'd, in a fullen Humour † bid

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.  
Amnon ra-  
vishes his Si-  
ster Tamar.

should it be forgot, that this excessive Mourning did not proceed simply from the Fear of the Loss of the Child, but from a deep Sense of his Sin, and of the divine Displeasure manifested in the Child's Sickness, and particularly from a just Apprehension of the Injury, which he had done the *Infant* by his Sin, and which he thought himself bound in Justice, by Prayer and Intercession, as much as he was able, to repair. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Poole's Annotations*.

† It is very observable, that in the whole Compass of this Story, there is not a Word said either of *Bathsheba's* Guilt or Punishment; but this might be, because, as to the Matter of her Husband's Death, she was innocent; to the *Adultery*, which she committed, she was entic'd by the Offers of a powerful King; and in the *Calamities* which beset him, she, no doubt, had her Share, and felt her Punishment. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† The Word *Solomon* is properly deriv'd from *Schalom*, which signifies *Peace*, intimating, that his Reign should be peaceable; but, by God's Appointment, *Nathan* gave him another Name, viz. *Jedidiah*, i. e. *the Beloved of God*. The Scripture however, never calls him by this Name, but only by that of *Solomon*; for what Reason we cannot tell, unless we may suppose, that the People, being long harass'd in War during his Father's Reign, might be pleas'd with this Name, and use it rather than the other, to intimate their Hopes and longing Desire of *Peace*. And for this Reason (among others) it may be inferr'd, that *Solomon* was born after the Conclusion of the *Ammonitish* War, tho' the sacred History takes Occasion from the Death of *Bathsheba's* First-born, to relate that Event first. Not long after this, *David* had another Son by *Bathsheba*, (2 Sam. v. 14. and 1 Chron. iii. 5.) whom he called *Nathan*, after the Name of the Prophet; and of these two *Christ* was born, tho' in different Lines: For *Joseph*, his suppos'd Father, came from *Solomon*, as *Matthew* (Chap. i. Ver. 6, 7.) relates it; and *Mary*, his real Mother, came from *Nathan*, as it is in *St Luke*, Chap. iii. Ver. 31. *Le Clerc's Commentary*, and *Bedford's Scripture Chronology*, lib. v. c. 4.

† The Borders of the *Geshurites* and *Maacathites* (as we read *Josh. xiii. 11, 13.*) were given by *Moses* to the *Israelites*, that seated themselves on the East of *Jordan*; nevertheless the *Children of Israel* expelled not the *Geshurites* and *Maacathites*, but they dwelt among the *Israelites* unto this Day: From whence it is evident, that the Cities of *Geshur* and *Maacab*, the two Capitals of two small Kingdoms, lay within the Borders of the Land of *Israel*: And tho' it does not appear how they were situated in respect of each other, yet it is certain, that they both lay on the South Side of Mount *Libanus*, in the North Part of the Half-Tribe of *Manasseh*, and on the East Side of the River *Jordan*. *Well's Geography of the Old Testament*, Vol. III.

† Virgins of the *Blood-royal* were kept secluse in Apartments separate from the Commerce of Men, into which not only Strangers, but even their own Fathers were not permitted to enter. *Amnon* however, at some Time or other, had seen the beautiful *Tamar*, or otherwise he could not have conceiv'd so strong a Passion for her. Upon some certain Ceremonial Occasions indeed, it was customary for the young Women to walk out, and shew themselves; but, considering their close Confinement at other Times, it was hardly possible for *Amnon* to find an Opportunity of declaring his Passion, much more of gratifying it; and therefore, out of pure Despair, he pin'd himself into a *Consumption*. *Calmet's Commentary*.

† *Jonadab* was the Son of *Shimeah*, the Brother of *David*.

† There is something so moving, and the Arguments are so strong, in *Tamar's* Speech to *Amnon*, that one would almost wonder why it did not prevail with him to desist. *Nay, my Brother, do not force me*. Here she reminds him of his Relation to her, for which she hop'd he would have such a Reverence, as not to meddle with her, tho' she herself were willing, much less to offer Violence to her, which it was abominable to do even to a Stranger, much more to one of the same Blood. *For no such Thing ought to be done in Israel*. Whatever other Nations did, who had not the Knowledge of God's Laws, she begs of him to consider, that they both belong'd to a Nation, which was God's peculiar People, had been instructed better, and therefore should act otherwise. *Do not thou this Folly*. She prays him (besides the Scandal it would give) to recollect with himself on the Heinousness of the Crime, and how highly offensive it would



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2949, 83c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, 53c.

For which he  
is murder'd by  
her Brother  
Absalom.

† bid her be gone; and when she remonstrated the ill Usage, had her turn'd out by main Force.

\* IN this mournful and distracted Condition *Tamar* repairs to her Brother *Absalom*, and tells him the whole Transaction of her Rape: But her Brother, tho' naturally a Man of an high Spirit, advis'd her to be silent in Point of Prudence, because her Raviſher was Heir apparent to the Crown; and himself so † artfully conceal'd his own Resentment, that every one believ'd he had taken no Notice of it. But about two Years after, under the Pretence of a Sheep-shearing Entertainment, (which, in those Countries, us'd to be attended with great Mirth and

Jollity) he invited his Friends and Relations; and, with the King's Consent (tho' himself declin'd going) all the Princes of the Blood, and more especially his Brother *Annon*, to his Country-Seāt at *Hazor*; where, while they were engag'd in Feasting and Drinking, his Servants, by his Direction, and through the Promise of an Impunity, fell upon *Annon*, (as *Absalom* gave the Signal) and immediately dispatch'd him. This put the rest of the Princes into such a Consternation, that they made the best of their Way from the House, as expecting the like Fate; and the King, when he heard the first News of the Thing, (supposing that *Absalom* had kill'd all the rest of his Brothers) was thrown into

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

would be to the Divine Majesty. *And I, whether shall I cause my Shame to go?* She beseeches him (besides the Sin against God) to consider the Disgrace it would be to her, who, after such a foul Act, must be asham'd to look any one in the Face. *And as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the Fools in Israel.* Lastly, She puts him in Mind of his own Reputation, which so vile an Action would tarnish for ever, and make him be look'd upon as a Man void of all Sense, Religion, Honour, and Humanity. *Now therefore, I pray thee, speak to the King; for he will not withhold me from thee.* It is a common Opinion among the Jewish Doctors, that, in the War which King *David* had with the King of *Geshur*, he took *Maacab*, his Daughter captive, and (as they fancy their Law allows, *Deut. xxi. 11.*) lay with her for once only, and then begat this Daughter; but that, upon her becoming a *Proselyte* to the Jewish Religion, he marry'd her, and afterwards had *Absalom*. *Tamar* therefore being born while her Mother was a *Gentile*, they suppose that she was not *David's* legal Child, and that *Annon* consequently might marry her: But all this is meer Talk, without any Shadow of Proof. The most probable Opinion is, that she was neither ignorant of the Law, (*Levit. xviii. 11.*) which prohibited such incestuous Marriages, nor thought her Father's Power so great, as that he might dispense with the Law upon this Occasion, but merely that she said any Thing, which she thought would please him, to stop his Sollicitations, and rude Attempts, and to escape, for the present, out of his Hands. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Jewish Antiquities*, lib. vii. c. 8.

† Interpreters seem to be at a great Loss to find out the Reason, why *Annon's* Love to his Sister should so soon be converted into such an Hatred, as to make him act so rudely, so brutally towards her; but it is no uncommon Thing for Men of violent and irregular Passions to pass from one Extreme to another. The Shame, which accompanies every base Action, the Remorse, and Repentance, and many bad Consequences, that immediately pursue it, make a Recoil in every Man's Temper; and therefore it is no Wonder, that a libidinous young Man, who would not spare so much as his own Sister, should, after Fruition, and when the Ardour of his Lust was satisfy'd, be seiz'd with a contrary Passion, and hate the Object he lov'd so much before, when he came coolly to compare the Pleasure and the Sin together, the Shortness of the one, and the Heinousness of the other. He hated his Sister, when he should have hated himself; and, as this outrageous Treatment of her made it impossible for his Guilt to be conceal'd, so God seems to have abandon'd him to the Tumult of his intemperate Mind, on purpose to make this Punishment of *David's* Adultery more flagrant, and the Prophet's Prediction of raising up evil to him out of his own House, 2 Sam. xii. 11. more conspicuous. *Calmet's* and *Le Clerc's* Commentaries, and The History of the Life of King *David*.

\* The Manner of *Tamar's* signifying her Vexation for the Injury and Disgrace, which her Brother had put upon her, is express'd by her putting Ashes upon her Head, 2 Sam. xiii. 19. and that this was an antient Custom, whereby to denote one's Grief and Concern for any great Loss or Calamity, is evident from that Passage of the Prophet, concerning the People of Tyre: *They shall cry bitterly, cast Dirt upon their Heads, and wallow themselves in the Ashes*, Ezek. xxvii. 30. from *Achilles's* Behaviour upon the Death of *Patroclus*, we have it in *Homer*:

Ἀμφοτέρωσι δ' ἔχευεν ἐλὼν κόνην ἀθλοεσσάν  
χένε' ἰο κακ κεφαλῆς, χάρην δ' ἥσυχονε πρόσωπον.

*Iliad. xviii.*

And from what *Messenius* did, upon the Death of his *Lausus*, according to *Virgil*:

Canitiem immundo deformat pulvere, & ambas

Ad cælum tendit palmas—

*Æneid x.*

† By this Means *Annon* was lull'd asleep into a Belief, that *Absalom* would not trouble him for what he had done, because he did not threaten, nor so much as expostulate with him, or take any Notice of what had pass'd, tho', in Reason, he ought to have been more afraid that he was meditating a terrible Revenge: According to the Lesson which the Mouse gave her young one, when she perceiv'd her alighted at the Noise of the crowing Cock, but regardless of the sly Approaches of the Cat, viz. "That there was no Danger to be fear'd from the fluttering Cock, but from the silent Cat, present Death. *Patrick's Commentary*.



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into the utmost Grief and Despair, till, by the Information of *Jonadab*, (who seems to have been privy to the Design) and the safe Arrival of the other Princes, he was certify'd that *Ammon* only was dead; but his Death alone was Matter of Sorrow and Lamentation enough.

Who thereupon  
is banish'd, but  
afterwards re-  
stor'd to his  
Father's Fa-  
vour.

*A B S A L O M*, who knew very well how highly his Father would resent this treacherous and barbarous Murther, † fled to his Mother's Relations, and was entertain'd by his Grandfather *Talmi*, at *Geshur*, for three Years. But, Length of Time having worn out *David*'s Grief, and *Joab*, perceiving that he had a secret Desire to see *Absalom* again, (if he could but find out an handsome Excuse for such a Purpose) procur'd a good artful Woman † from *Tekoah*, who, † in a Speech, which he had contriv'd for her, was to convince the King, that in some Cases the Life of a

Murtherer might be sav'd. The Woman *Joab* introduc'd; and when she had told her Tale, so as to induce the King to a Compliance with her feign'd Petition, she gave him at length to know, that the Case she had been stating was *Absalom*'s; and that, if in a private Man, the King was dispos'd to be merciful, there was much more Reason for his pardoning his own Son, whose Absence the People lamented, and for whom they had so general an Affection.

THE King, being appris'd that *Joab* had put the Woman upon this Artifice, order'd him to recal *Absalom*, but † confin'd him to live in his own House, and, as yet, would not seem so far reconcil'd to him, as to admit him into his Presence. But, at the End of two Years, *Absalom* prevail'd with *Joab* to intercede farther for a full Pardon, and to introduce him to the King,

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

† In the Case of wilful Murther, the Law is, *That the Avenger of Blood shall slay the Murtherer; when he meeteth him he shall slay him*, Numb. xxxv. 21. From whence it seems to follow, that it was not in any Man's Power to protect the wilful Murtherer, because the *Avenger of Blood*, i. e. the nearest Relation of the Person murther'd, might, with Impunity, wherever he met him, kill him. As *Absalom* therefore had committed a design'd Murther, his own Life was every Moment in Danger; and as there were no Cities of Refuge in his own Country, that, in this Case, would yield him Protection, he was forc'd to flee out of the Kingdom, to his Mother's Father. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† *Tekoah* was a City in the Tribe of *Judah*, which lay South of *Jerusalem*, and about twelve Miles distant from it. And herein does *Joab*'s Cunning appear not a little, that he made choice of a Woman rather than a Man, because Women can more easily express their Passions, and sooner gain Pity in their Miseries; a Widow, which was a Condition of Life proper to move Compassion; a grave Woman, (as *Josephus* calls her) which made her better fitted for addressing the King; and a Woman, not known at *Jerusalem*, but living at some Distance in the Country, that the Case, which she was to represent, might not too readily be enquir'd into. *Poole's Annotations*.

† The Art and Contrivance of this Widow of *Tekoah*'s Speech is very remarkable. When the Woman of *Tekoah* spake to the King, she fell on her Face to the Ground, and did Obedience, and said, Help, O King! And the King said to her, What aileth thee? And she said, I am indeed a Widow-Woman, and my Husband is dead, and thy Handmaid had two Sons, and they two strove together in the Field, and there was none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him; and behold this Family is risen against thine Handmaid, and they say, Deliver him that smote his Brother, that we may kill him, for the Life of his Brother, whom he slew, and we will destroy the Heir also: And so they shall quench my Coal that is left, (i. e. deprive me of the little Comfort of my Life which remains, and is, as it were, a Coal buried in the Ashes) and leave to my Husband neither Name nor Remainder upon the Earth, 2 Sam. xiv. 4, &c. Now the Scope of all this Speech was to frame a Case, as like to *David*'s as she could devise, that, by prevailing with him to determine it in her Favour, he might be convinc'd, how much more reasonable it was to preserve *Absalom*. But, how plausible soever the Likeness might be, there was a wide Difference between her Case and his: For her Son (as she pretended) was slain in a Scuffle with his Brother; whereas *Amnon* was taken off by a premeditated Murther: He was slain in the Field, where there were no Witnesses, whether the Fact was wilfully done or no; whereas all the King's Sons saw *Amnon* barbarously murther'd by his Brother: And, lastly, he was her only Son, by whom alone she could hope to have her Husband's Name perpetuated; whereas *David*'s Family was in no Danger of being extinct, even tho' he had given up *Absalom* to Justice. But there was a great deal of Policy in not making the Similitude too close and visible, lest the King should perceive the Drift of the Woman's Petition, before she had obtain'd a Grant of Pardon for her Son, and came to make the Application to the King: And tho', upon her making the Application, the King might have argu'd the Disparity of the two Cases, yet he thought proper to wave this, and admit her Reasoning to be good, because he was as desirous to have *Absalom* recall'd, as were any of his Subjects. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† This small Severity to *Absalom*, small in Comparison of the Heinousness of his Crime, *David* might think necessary, not only to put him upon a sincere Humiliation and Repentance for what he had done, when he found that the King (indulgent as he was) had not fully pardon'd him; but to convince the People likewise, how detestable his Crime was in the King's Esteem, and how averse he would be to pass by the like in another Person, who could not endure the Sight of a Son, whose Hand was defil'd with a Brother's Blood. *Patrick's Commentary*.



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King, who, upon his humbling himself and begging Pardon, took him up from the Ground, where he lay prostrate, and gave him a Kiss, as a Token of his Forgiveness and royal Favour.

His Beauty,  
Popularity, and  
Rebellion a-  
gainst his Fa-  
ther.

*A B S A L O M* was certainly one of the most comely Persons in all *Israel*, without the least Blemish from Top to Toe, and with an Head of Hair (which in those Days was thought a great Beauty) prodigiously long and thick, so that his Person drew every one's Eye to him, as soon as he was restor'd to Favour at Court: But, as *Amnon*, his eldest Brother, was slain, and *Chileab*, his second, by this Time dead, he began to look upon himself as presumptive *Heir* to the Crown, and thereupon to affect a State and Equipage greater than usual. He provided himself with Chariots and Horses, and had a Guard of fifty Men to attend his Person: But,

notwithstanding this, he would be \* so obsequious and humble, as to stoop to the meanest People, that had any Thing to say to him; would offer his Service to solicit every one's Cause, that had any Business at Court; and, upon proper Occasions, not fail to instil into the Peoples Minds a bad Opinion of the present *Administration*, as if the *publick* Affairs were neglected, but that, if he were at the Helm, Things should be conducted at an other-guise Rate.

† By these Arts and Insinuations, which were advantageously seconded by the Comeliness of his Person, (as we said) and the Familiarity of his Address, he gain'd to himself the Affections of the People, and insensibly alienated them from *David*. ‡ When therefore he imagin'd that Matters were ripe for his Purpose, he desir'd Leave of his Father to go to *Hebron*, pretending

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

\* It is an Observation of *Plato*, that, when any one intends to make himself a *Tyrant* in a popular State, he no sooner enters on the Government, but, προσγεῖται, τὴν καὶ ἀσπάζεται τὰς πάντας, ἃς ἂν περιτυγχάνει, he smiles upon, and kindly salutes all Sorts of People, wherever he meets them; avowing, that he hates Tyranny, promising great Things, both in private and publick, καὶ πᾶσιν ἰλεῖται τὴν καὶ πατρῷον εἶναι προσποιεῖται, and making, as if he would be mild, and gentle, and fatherly to all; even as *Tacitus* relates of *Otho*, that protendens manum, adorare vulgum, jacere oscula, & omnia serviliter pro dominatione; that he us'd to kiss, and shake Hands with any one, court and adore the Mob, and do every little servile Thing, to get Possession of the Government. *Plato* de Repub. l. 8. and *Tacit.* Hist. lib. i.

† It is an Observation of *Aristotle* in his *Politicks*, (lib. v. c. 4.) that all Changes and Revolutions in Government are made by one of these two Ways, ὅτε μὲν διὰ βίας, ὅτε δὲ δι' ἀπάτης, either by Force and Violence, or else by Deceit and Craft: Nor ever was there a Man better form'd by Nature to manage Matters in this latter Way, than was *Abshalom*, who was a Person of Courage and Gallantry, of Civility and Courtely, young, and wonderfully beautiful, descended from Kings, both by Father's and Mother's Side, and prodigal enough of large and magnificent Promises, if ever he came to be King; a Character not unlike that of *Turnus* in *Virgil*:

Hunc decus egrégium formæ movet, atque juventæ,

Hunc atavi reges, hunc claris dextera factis.

*Æneid.* lib. vii.

‡ This is said in the Text, to have been after forty Years, 2 Sam. xv. 7. but where to date the Beginning of the forty Years has occasion'd much Disagreement among Commentators. Some compute them from the Time, that the *Israelites* demanded a King of *Samuel*; others, from the first Time, that *David* was anointed King; others, from the first Commencement of his Reign over *Judah*; and others again, from the Time, that he took Possession of the whole Kingdom. The two latter of these Opinions are insupportable, because *David* reign'd but forty Years in all, and was now so hail and hearty, as to be able to walk on Foot; whereas, in the latter End of his Life, he was very infirm and Bed-ridden. The learned *Usher* indeed, makes these forty Years to commence from the Time of *David's* first Unction, that therefore he was threescore Years old, when this Rebellion broke out, and liv'd ten Years after it: But (with all due Deference to so great Authority) both this, and the other Opinion, that computes from the Time that the Demand of a King was made, are forc'd, and unnatural; have no Affinity to the Text, nor do they suggest any Reason, why the sacred Historian should begin his Account of this unnatural Rebellion, with an *And it came to pass, that after forty Years*: Whereas, if we consider the Account of what went before; how *Abshalom*, by all the Arts of Popularity, a splendid Equipage, condescending Behaviour, large Promises, and flattering Speeches, had alienated the Hearts of the People from his Father, we cannot but be tempted to think, that there is an Error crept into the Text; that instead of *Arbaim, forty*, as our Copies have it, the Word should be *Arba, four*, only, i. e. four Years after that *Abshalom* was re-establish'd in *Jerusalem*, and had us'd all his alluring Arts to gain the Nation's Affections, the first Step that he took, was to go to *Hebron*. This makes the Sense easy and entire, and is confirm'd by the Authority of the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Versions, the Judgment of several able Critics, and the Testimony of *Josephus* himself, whose Words are, μετὰ δὲ τὴν πατρὸς παρλαλήν τεσσάρων ἔτων ἤδη παρελθουσέων, that four Years after his Father was reconciled to him, this Conspiracy broke out. *Calmer's* Commentary, *Howell's* History, in the Notes, and *Josephus's* Jewish Antiquities, lib. vii. c. 8.



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ing that he had vowed a Vow in his *Exile*, that, whenever it should please God to bring him back to *Jerusalem*, he would offer, in that Place, a solemn Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. The King little suspecting his hidden Design, and being desirous that all religious Services should be punctually perform'd, gave him free Leave to go, and wish'd him a good Journey. *Hebron* was the Place of his own Nativity, and where the Royal Seat had been, in the Beginning of *David's* Reign; and therefore he thought it the properest for his wicked Enterprize: And no sooner was he settled there, but he sent his *Emissaries* about to sound the Inclinations of the several Tribes, and to exhort those, whom they should

gain over to his Party, to be ready to take up Arms, † as soon, as they should hear that he was proclaim'd King. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

THIS occasion'd a general Insurrection. *Abfalom* was the Nation's *Darling*; and, upon this Summons, † People flock'd to him from every Part: So that *David*, who had Intelligence of all this, thought it not safe for him to continue any longer in *Jerusalem* †, but, leaving the Place, with a Design to retire beyond *Jordan*, he was attended by his Guards, his best Troops, and principal Friends. *Zadok* and *Abiathar* the Priests, understanding that the King was departed from *Jerusalem*, brought the *Ark of the Covenant* to accompany him in his Distress; but † he desir'd them to carry

*The King leaves Jerusalem, and, in his Retreat, meets with various Kinds of Usage.*

† The Expression in the Text is, *as soon as you hear the Sound of the Trumpet*, 2 Sam. xv. 10. which looks as if *Abfalom* had planted Trumpeters at proper Distances to take the Sound from one another, and disperse it over all the Kingdom, that so they, who were Lovers of his Cause, might instantly resort to his Assistance and Support; to which they were encourag'd, no doubt, by the Suggestions of his *Emissaries*, who might persuade the People, that all this was done by the King's Consent and Approbation, who, being aged and infirm himself, was willing to resign his Kingdom to his eldest and most noble Son, who was descended from a King by both Parents. *Le Clerc's* Commentary, and *Pool's* Annotations.

† It would really make one wonder, how any People could so easily abandon a Prince, so brave, so happy, and successful as *David* had been; how they could forget his excellent Qualities, or be unmindful of the Services he had done the Nation; but for this there may be some Reasons assign'd. In every Nation there are always some turbulent and discontented Spirits, who are uneasy with the present State of Things, and promise themselves some Benefit from a Change. *Saul's* Party was not as yet entirely extinct, and *Joab*, who was *David's* Prime Minister, behav'd with an insufferable Pride and Insolence. His Crimes, which were very black, and which the King durst not punish, redounded upon him; and the King himself had given his Enemies Umbrage enough against him, in living with *Bathsheba*, after he had murder'd her Husband: But, what gave the fairest Pretence of all, was the Obstruction of Justice in the Civil Administration: For had there not been something of this, *Abfalom* could have had no Grounds for making so loud Complaints. These were some of the Causes of so general a Revolt in the People: And yet, after all, there might be something in what *Abarbinel* imagines, viz. That neither *Abfalom*, nor the Elders of *Israel*, nor the rest of the People, who were misled by them, had any Intention to divest *David* of his Crown and Dignity, much less to take away his Life; but only to substitute *Abfalom*, as Coadjutor to him, for the Execution of the Royal Authority, during his Life-time, and to be his Successor after his Death. For, as it would have been monstrously wicked in *Abfalom* to have design'd the Destruction of so kind a Father; so it is hard to conceive, how he could have gain'd to his Party such a Multitude of Abettors in so villainous an Enterprize. This however we may observe, that *David* look'd upon their Proceedings (2 Sam. xv. 14. and xvi. 11.) as an Attempt upon his Life; and that (whatever their first Intentions were) they came at last to a Resolution to have him killed, to make way for their own better Security: Which may be a sufficient Warning to all Men, never to begin any Thing that is wrong, for fear that it should lead them to the Commission of that, which they at first abhor'd, when they find they cannot be safe in one Wickedness, without perpetrating a greater. *Calmet's* and *Patrick's* Commentaries.

† Tho' the Fort of *Sion* was very strong and impregnable, yet there are several Reasons which might induce *David* to quit *Jerusalem*. He had not laid in Provisions for a long Siege, nor was *Jerusalem*, in every Part of it, defensible; and if *Abfalom* had once took it, as it was the Capital, he would soon have been Master of the whole Kingdom. There was some Reason to suspect likewise, that the Inhabitants were faulty, and so much addicted to the contrary Party, that had he stood a Siege, and been reduc'd to Straits, they might possibly deliver him up to *Abfalom*. Nor was the Preservation of the City itself, which *David* had beautify'd, and adorn'd with a fine and stately Palace, and where God had appointed to put his Name and Worship, the least Part of his Concern; and therefore he thought it more conducive to his Interest in all Respects, rather than be couped up in a Place, which he desired to preserve from being the Seat of War, to march abroad into the Country, where he might probably raise a considerable Army, both for his own Defence, and the Suppression of the Rebels. *Pool's* Annotations.

† This he might do for several Reasons; for either he might think it not decent to have the *Ark* wander about with him he knew not whither, and to expose it to all the Hazards and Inconveniencies, which he himself was like to undergo; or he might suppose, that this would be a Means to expose the Priests to the Violence of *Abfalom's* Rage,



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carry it back, and to continue in *Jerusalem*, because they might be of Use to gain him Intelligence of the Enemies Motions and Designs, and their Character was too sacred, to fear any Violence from the *Usurper*. *Hushai*, † the *Archite*, his faithful Friend and Counsellor, came likewise to attend him, and, with all Expressions of Sorrow, to see his royal Master in such Distress, offer'd to share his Fortune: But *David* enjoin'd him to return, and told him, that he would be more serviceable to him in the City, by pretending to adhere to *Abshalom*, and by defeating the Counsels of *Abitophel*, who, as he understood for Certainty, was † engag'd in his Son's Measures, and whose great Abilities (which the King was not unacquainted with) gave him no small Uneasiness.

*DAVID* had scarce pass'd over Mount *Olivet*, which lies to the East of *Jerusalem*, when *Ziba*, whom he had made Steward to *Mephibosheth* his Friend *Jonathan*'s Son, came, and presented him with

a † considerable Quantity of Wine, and other Provisions; but, upon the King's enquiring for his Master, who he thought above all Men, in Point of *Gratitude*, should have kept firm to his Interest, the perfidious Wretch accus'd him of staying behind in *Jerusalem*, in Hopes that himself might be made King; and the too credulous King, in this general Distraction of his Affairs, believing the Accusation to be true, made an hasty *Grant* of all *Mephibosheth*'s Estate to this base Servant, and treacherous *Sycophant*.

As *David* drew near to *Baburim*, a City in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, † one *Shimei*, a Descendant from the Family of *Saul*, and who dwelt in that Place, came out, and threw Stones at him, and, in the Hearing of the whole Company, loaded him with the bitterest Reproaches and Execrations, so that *Abishai* desir'd Leave of the King to go and dispatch the insolent Rebel: But, by no Means, would the King permit him, but bore all with an admirable Patience, † and Resignation

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

(as he had before expos'd them to *Saul*'s Fury upon another Occasion) if God, in his Judgment, should permit him to prevail; or this might look as a Distrust of the Divine Goodness, and that he plac'd more Confidence in the Token of God's Presence, than he did in God himself, who had preserv'd him in the long Persecution of *Saul*, when he had no Ark with him. But what seems the chief Reason, at that Time, for his sending back the Ark, was, — That the Priests and *Levites*, (of whose Fidelity he was sufficiently satisfy'd) by giving him Intelligence of the Enemies Motions, might do him more Service in *Jerusalem*, than they could do in his Camp. *Pool's* Annotations.

† This Man might be of the antient Race of the *Archites*, Descendants from *Canaan*, of whom *Moses* speaks, *Gen.* x. 17. but since the Name of these antient People is differently written, I should rather think, that this additional Name was given him from the Place of his Nativity, viz. *Archi*, a Town situated on the Frontiers of *Benjamin* and *Ephraim*, to the West of *Bethel*, *Josh.* xvi. 2.

† The *Jews* are of Opinion, that *Abitophel* was incens'd against *David*, and therefore ready to go over to the adverse Party, because he had abus'd *Bathsheba*, whom they take to have been his Grand-daughter, because she was the Daughter of *Eliam*, 2 Sam. xi. 3. and *Abitophel* had a Son of that Name, 2 Sam. xxiii. 34. for this Reason they imagine, that he advis'd *Abshalom* to lie with his Father's Concubines, that he might be repaid in Kind; tho' the Scripture assigns another, viz. that he and his Father might thereby become irreconcilable Enemies. *Pool's* Annotations.

‡ And yet the Text tells us, it was but one Bottle: But what we render *Bottle*, was, in those Times, a Bag, or Vessel made of Leather, which might contain a great deal of Wine; because we cannot suppose, but that the *Liquor* was proportionate to the rest of the Present. *Patrick's* Commentary.

† Whether this Man had been a personal Sufferer in the Fall of *Saul*'s Family, or what else had exasperated him against *David*, it no where appears; but it seems, as if he had conceiv'd some very heinous Offence against him, when neither the Presence of a King, nor the Terror of his Guards, could restrain him from throwing Stones, and bitter Speeches at him: And it looks, as if the King were fallen into the utmost Contempt, when one private Man could think of venting his Malice at him, in so gross a Manner, with Impunity. *Howell's* History, in the Notes.

† The Words of *David* upon this Occasion are, *So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, curse David: Let him alone, let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him*; not that God commanded it by his Word, for that severely forbids cursing, *Exod.* xxii. 28, nor mov'd him to it by his Spirit; for neither was that possible, because God tempteth no Man, *James* i. 13. But the Meaning is, that the secret Providence of God did over-rule, and determine him so to do, i. e. God did not put any Wickedness into *Shimei*'s Heart (for he had, of himself, an Heart full of Malignity and Venom against *David*) but only left him to his own Wickedness; took away that common Prudence, which would have restrain'd him from so dangerous an Action; directed his Malice, that it should be exercis'd against *David*, rather:



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

Abſalom en-  
ters Jeruſa-  
lem.

to the Will of God, as being conſcious of his own Guilt in the Caſe of *Uriah*, and of the divine Juſtice in thus afflicting him.

WHILE *David* continu'd at *Baburim*, *Abſalom* and his Party entering *Jeruſalem*, were receiv'd with the general *Acclamations* of the People, and *Huſhai*, not forgetful of the King's Inſtructions, went to compliment him, and offer'd him his Service. *Abſalom* knew that he was his Father's intimate Friend and Counſellor, and therefore banter'd him at firſt, upon his pretending to deſert his old Maſter; but *Huſhai* † excus'd himſelf in ſuch a Manner, and answer'd all his *Queſtions* with that Subtilty, that he paſs'd upon the Prince for a worthy Friend, and accordingly was receiv'd into his *Privy-Council*.

Ahitophel's  
Counſel, upon  
the Rejection  
of which, he  
hangs himſelf.

A COUNCIL was preſently call'd, wherein *Ahitophel*, who was *Preſident*, and ſtood higheſt in *Abſalom*'s Eſteem, ſpoke firſt; and the two chief Things, which he advis'd him to do, were, firſt to place a Tent on the Top of the Palace, (for by this Time he had taken Poſſeſſion of his Father's Palace) and to lie publick-

ly with his Father's *Concubines*, that all the Soldiers might ſee, and conclude that, after ſuch an Indignity, there could be no Hopes of a Reconciliation, and thereby be incited to fight more deſperately to ſecure him in the Poſſeſſion of the Throne. This Advice was ſuitable perhaps to the young Man's vicious Inclinations, and therefore he delay'd not to put it in Execution: But, as for the *ſecond* Thing, which *Ahitophel* propos'd, viz. "To take twelve Thouſand choice Men, and purſue after *David* that \* very Night, and to fall upon his *Guards*, which were fatigu'd with their March, and unable to make Reſiſtance, and ſo ſurprize the King, and kill him," he deſir'd to conſult *Huſhai* herein; who, ſeeming not to flight *Ahitophel*'s Propoſal, advis'd rather to delay the Attempt, until he had got all the Forces of the Kingdom together. "For, as *David*, and his Men were known to be brave, and, at that Time, both † exaſperated, and deſperate, in Caſe they ſhould worſt the Party ſent againſt them, this would  
" be

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

rather than any other Man; and brought him into ſo diſtreſs'd a Condition, that he might ſeem a proper Object of his Scorn and Contempt, which is enough to juſtify the Expreſſion, *The Lord hath bidden him*; in the ſame Manner that we read of his commanding the Ravens, 1 Kings xvii. 4. and ſometimes inanimate Creatures, *Pſal.* cxlvii. 15, 18. The ſhort is, *David* look'd upon *Shimei* as an Inſtrument in God's Hands, and therefore took all his Abuſes patiently, out of a Conſciouſneſs of his Sinfulneſs, and a Reverence to that Deity, who had brought him ſo low, as to deſerve the Inſults of this vile *Benjamite*. *Pool's* Annotations.

† The Manner, in which *Joſephus* makes *Huſhai* answer *Abſalom*, is artful enough, tho' hardly becoming an honeſt Man. "There is no contending, ſays he, with the Will of God, and the Conſent of the People; and ſo long as you have them on your Side, you may be ſecure of my Fidelity. It is from God, that you have receiv'd your Kingdom; and if you can think me worthy of a Place in the Number of thoſe, you will vouchſafe to own, you ſhall find me as true to yourſelf, as ever I was to your Father. No Man is to account the preſent State of Things uneasy, ſo long as the Government continues in the ſame Line, and a Son of the ſame Family ſucceeds to the Throne." *Jewiſh Antiq.* lib. vii. c. 8.

\* It is a wiſe Obſervation in *Tacitus*, *Nil in diſcordiis civilibus feſtinatione letius, ubi facta, potius quam conſulto opus eſt*: *Ahitophel* therefore thought it highly neceſſary to make Diſpatch upon this Occaſion; becauſe he knew, that if he ſhould give the People, that had revolted from their Allegiance, Leiſure to think of what they were doing againſt their lawful Prince, he would give that Prince Time to raiſe ſome regular Troops, and thoſe, that were about him, Space to recover from their firſt Fright; *Abſalom*'s Party would dwindle into nothing, and *David*'s grow ſtronger and ſtronger: *Daret malorum pœnitentia, daret bonorum conſenſui; ſcelera impetu, bona concilia morâ valeſcere*, *Tacit. Hiſt.* lib. i. And therefore he advis'd marching immediately againſt him, without giving him a Moment's Time to recover himſelf. *Calmet's* Commentary.

† There is ſomething very plausible, and elegant too, in the Advice, which *Huſhai* gives *Abſalom*, not immediately to purſue, and fall upon *David*; *Thou knoweſt thy Father and his Men, that they be mighty Men, and they be chafed in their Minds, as a Bear robbed of her Whelps in the Field*, 2 Sam. xvii. 8. Every one knows, that a Bear is a very fierce Creature; but She-Bears (as *Ariſtotle* tells us) are more fierce than the Male, particularly when they have young Ones, but moſt of all, when theſe young Ones are taken from them. For this Reaſon the Scripture makes frequent Uſe of this Similitude: *I will be unto them as a Lion*, ſays God, in Relation to the People of *Iſrael*, and as a Leopard by the Way; *I will meet them as a Bear, that is bereaved of her Whelps, and will rent the Gout of their Hearts*, *Hofea* xiii. 7, 8. Vid. *Prov.* xvii. 12, &c. So that the Purport of *Huſhai*'s Advice is founded on this Maxim, "That we ſhould not drive an Enemy to Deſpair, nor attack thoſe, who are reſolv'd to ſell their Lives at as dear a Rate as poſſible." *Calmet's* Commentary.



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

“ be a Means to discourage others, and be  
“ thought a very inauspicious Beginning :  
“ Whereas, if they staid till a numerous  
“ Army were come together, † they  
“ might be assur’d of Victory.” *Absalom*,  
and the rest of the *Council* approv’d of this  
last Advice, and *Hushai* immediately dis-  
patch’d two Messengers to *David*, ac-  
quainting him with what had pass’d in  
*Council*, and advising him instantly to pass  
the *Jordan*, lest *Absalom* should change  
his Mind, and come and fall upon him on  
a sudden.

THE Messengers, as they were making  
the best of their Way, happen’d to meet  
some of *Absalom*’s Party, but had the good  
Fortune to conceal themselves in a *Well*,  
until their Pursuers were return’d; and  
then proceeding on their Journey, came  
and deliver’d their Dispatches to the  
King, who decamp’d by Break of Day,  
pass’d the *Jordan*, and came to *Mahanaim*,  
a City of *Gilead*, where he was kindly  
receiv’d. As soon as *Ahitophel* heard that  
*David* was out of Danger, either taking  
it amiss that his Counsel was slighted, or  
perceiving, by *Absalom*’s weak Conduct,  
that Things were not likely to succeed,  
and he, consequently, \* liable to be ex-  
pos’d to *David*’s hottest Indignation, for

the Counsel he had already given; partly  
out of *Pride*, and partly out of *Fear* of  
worse Torments, he went to his own  
House, where he first made his *Will*, and  
then hang’d himself.

*DAVID* had not not been long at  
*Mahanaim*, before *Absalom*, having got  
together a numerous Army, which was  
commanded by *Amasa*, the Son of *Itbra*,  
a Relation of *Absalom*’s by Marriage, left  
*Jerusalem*, and pass’d the *Jordan*, in Pur-  
suit of his Father. The King, hearing of  
the Approach of his Rebel Son, and fore-  
seeing that a Battle was unavoidable,  
divided his Army into three Bodies. The  
first to be commanded by *Joab*, the second  
by his Brother *Abishai*, and the third by  
† *Ittai*, the *Gittite*, and, himself intended  
to go in Person with them. But, by the  
Importunity of the People about him, he  
was prevail’d with not to hazard his Per-  
son in Battle; and perhaps was more easily  
dissuaded from it, because the Battle was  
to be against a Son, for whom he still  
retain’d so tender an Affection, that he gave  
the three *Generals* a strict Charge, in the  
Hearing of the Soldiers, that (for his Sake)  
they should use *Absalom* kindly, in case  
he should fall into their Hands.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

An Engage-  
ment between  
the King’s and  
Absalom’s  
Party, where-  
in Absalom is  
vanquish’d,  
and slain.

THE

† The Benefits which *Hushai* suggests from *Absalom*’s having a large Army, are thus express’d in an *hyperbolic* Way, suitable to the *Genius* of that insolent young Man, to whom he gave his Advice, and therefore more likely to prevail with him: Moreover, if he be gotten into a City, then shall all Israel bring Ropes to that City, and we will draw it into the River, until there be not one small Stone found there, 2 Sam. xvii. 13. Where his Meaning is, that if *David* should quit the open Field, and betake himself to the strongest of their Cities, encompass’d with high Walls and deep Ditches, such a numerous Army (as he propos’d) would be sufficient to begirt it round, and, by Ropes put about the Walls, draw them down, and all the Houses of the City into the Ditch, that ran about it: Not that any such Practice was ever us’d in War, and therefore the Words must be look’d upon as merely *Thrafonical*, and calculated to please *Absalom*; unless we will say with some, that the Word in the Original may denote such *Machines* as are work’d by Ropes, and were, at that Time, in use to batter down Walls. *Calmer’s* and *Patrick’s* Commentaries.

\* *Josephus* thus relates the Matter: — “ When *Ahitophel* was come home to *Galmon*, he called his Family together, and told them the Advice, which he had given *Absalom*, but that he would not follow it, and that, in a short Time, that Refusal would be his Ruin; for *David* would certainly battle him, and soon recover his Kingdom. Now it is more honourable for me, says he, to die, asserting my Liberty like a Man, than to wait sneaking till *David* comes in again, and to be slay’d at last for the Services I have done the Son against the Father.” *Jewish Antiq.* lib. vii. c. 9.

† In 2 Sam. xv. 18. we read, that all the *Gittites*, six hundred Men, which came after him (viz. *David*) from *Gath*, pass’d on before the King; but who those *Gittites* were ’tis hard to determine, because we have no Mention made of them, in any other Part of Scripture. Some imagine, that they were Natives of *Gath*, who, taken with the Fame of *David*’s Piety, and happy Successes, came along with *Ittai*, (whom the *Jews* suppose to have been the Son of *Achish*, King of *Gath*) and, being proselyted to the *Jewish* Religion, became Part of *David*’s Guard, and attended him in his Wars. But others rather think, that they were Men of *Jewish* Extract, but had this additional Name, from their fleeing unto *David* (probably under the Conduct of *Ittai*) while he was at *Gath*, and accompanying him ever after, not only in the Time of *Saul*’s Persecution of him, but even after his Accession to the united Kingdoms of *Judah* and *Israel*. *Patrick’s* Commentary.



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
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1055, &c.

THE two Armies met in the † Wood of *Ephraim*, which belongeth to the Tribe of *Manasseh*, where *Absalom's* Army, tho' much superior in Number, was defeated, and put to Flight: For the *Loyalists*, upon this Occasion, behav'd so gallantly, that they kill'd † twenty Thousand of the Rebels upon the Spot, and would doubtless have carry'd the Slaughter farther, had not *Absalom* (the chief Cause of all this Mischief) been taken, and slain.

HIS Hair (as we said before) was of a prodigious Length, and Largeness; and, as he was now in Flight from the Enemy, and riding with great Speed, under the Trees, it happen'd to \* entangle itself on one of the Boughs in such a Manner, that it lifted him off his Saddle, and his Mule running from under him, left him there hanging in the Air, and unable to disengage himself.

IN this Condition a private Soldier found

him, and told it unto *Joab*, who blam'd him for not having kill'd him; and when the Man, in Excuse, urg'd the Command, which he heard the King give the *Generals*, to be very tender and careful of his Son's Life, *Joab*, looking upon all this as nothing, or as a Command fitter for a Parent, than a King, went to the Place where he was \* hanging, and, having first given him his Death's Wound himself, order'd the People, which were by, to dispatch him; and so went, and founded a Retreat to prevent any farther Effusion of Blood, and to give *Absalom's* Party an Opportunity of escaping to their respective Homes.

THUS died the wicked and rebellious *Absalom*, and, instead of an honourable Interment, fit for a King's Son, his Body was taken down, and thrown into a Pit, and cover'd with an \* Heap of Stones.

The

† This Wood was so called, (as some imagine) because the *Ephramites* were wont to drive their Cattle over *Jordan* to feed them in it; but others (with more Probability) suppose, that it had its Name from the great Slaughter (related in *Judg. xii.*) which *Jephthah* had formerly made of the *Ephramites* in that Place. *Howell's History*, in the Notes.

† The Expression in the Text is, *The Wood devoured more People that Day, than the Sword devoured*, 2 Sam. xviii. 8. which some think was occasion'd by their falling into Pits, pressing one another to Death in strait Places, creeping into lurking Holes, and there being starv'd to Death, or otherwise devour'd by wild Beasts, which met them in their Flight: But the most easy and simple Meaning of the Passage is, that there were more slain in the Wood, than in the Field of Battle. The Field of Battle (as *Josephus* tells us, *Jewish Antiq. lib. vii. cap. 9.*) was a Plain, with a Wood contiguous to it; and therefore, when *Absalom's* Army was put to the Rout, and betook themselves to the Wood for Refuge, their Pursuers made a greater Slaughter of them there, than they otherwise would have done, because they could not run away so fast in the Wood, as they might have done in the open Field. *Patrick's Commentary*.

\* The Words in the Text, indeed, make no Mention of *Absalom's* Hair in this Place: They only inform us, that *Absalom* rode upon a Mule, and that Mule went under the thick Boughs of a great Oak, and his Head caught hold of the Oak, and he was taken up between the Heaven and the Earth, and the Mule, that was under him, went away, 2 Sam. xviii. 9. From whence some infer, that the Meaning of the Historian is, not that *Absalom* hung by his Hair, but that his Neck was so wedged between the Boughs, by the swift Motion of the Mule, that he was not able to disengage himself. For it is hardly to be question'd, say they, but that, when he went to Battle, he had an Helmet on; and an Helmet, which cover'd his Head, would have hinder'd his Hair from being intangled in the Boughs: But 'tis only supposing, either that his Helmet was such, as left a great deal of his Hair visible and uncover'd, or that, if it was large enough to enclose the whole, he might, upon this Occasion, throw it off, (as well as his other heavy Armour) to make himself lighter, and expedite his Flight; and then there will be no Incongruity in the common, and receiv'd Opinion, to which the Authority of *Josephus* adds some Confirmation, viz. "That, as *Absalom* was making his Escape, upon the whistling of the Air, a snagged Bough of a Tree took hold of his Hair, and the Mule, running forward from under him, left him dangling in the Air." *Jewish Antiq. lib. vii. c. 9.*

\* Commentators have observ'd the Justice of God, in bringing *Absalom* to a condign Punishment, and such a Kind of Death, as was ordain'd by the Law for Offences, like unto his. For whereas, in the first Place, he was hanged as it were, this was declar'd by the Law to be an accursed Death, Deut. xxi. 23. and was, afterwards, in some Measure, stoned; this was the particular Kind of Death, that the Law prescribed for a stubborn and rebellious Son, Deut. xxi. 21.

\* In the Description of the *Hoh-Land*, some Geographers tell us, that this Heap of Stones remain'd even to their Days, and that all Travellers, as they pass'd by it, were wont to throw a Stone to add to the Heap, in Detestation of his Rebellion against his Father. For, though it became a Custom among the *Greeks* to raise an Heap of Stones in the Place where any great Person was interr'd, as a Monument of Honour and Respect; yet it is plain, that none of *David's* Army intended any Honour to *Absalom's* Memory in accumulating Stones upon him, nor can we think, that *David* himself (though too fond of this Rebel-Son) made any Alteration afterwards in the Form of his Burial, for

Fear

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

## The OBJECTION.

“ **T**HIS indeed was the woful End  
“ of *David*’s favourite Son and  
“ Heir, but to his own Mis-conduct the  
“ *Father* might impute the Irregularities  
“ of his Children, since, either by an  
“ *over-weening* Fondness to them, a *tacit*  
“ Connivance at what they did amiss, or  
“ an *exemplary* Encouragement given to  
“ it by himself, he suffer’d Iniquity to  
“ abound among them. For, after his  
“ Adultery with *Uriah*’s Wife, (and yet,  
“ one would think, he had Women  
“ enough of his own) and the base Mur-  
“ ther of her gallant Husband, for which  
“ no Excuse, no Colour of Apology can  
“ be made, with what Face could he re-  
“ prove, much more chastize (as it de-  
“ serv’d) the *incestuous* Rape of his Son,  
“ *Amnon* upon the beauteous *Tamar*, or  
“ the barbarous and bloody Revenge,  
“ which *Absalom* took upon this Brother  
“ for violating his Sister’s Honour?

“ **H**AD *David* interpos’d but his  
“ *paternal* Authority, and punish’d *Am-*  
“ *non*’s Crime with the Severity it re-  
“ quir’d, *Absalom*’s Resentment had per-  
“ haps never broke out into such Violence  
“ as it did; but where do we read of any  
“ Punishment, any Disgrace, nay, even  
“ of any Discountenance, put upon *Am-*  
“ *non* for his brutal and impious Usage of  
“ his Sister? All that the Historian tells  
“ us of the Matter is, that, (c) *when*  
“ *King David* heard of these Things, he  
“ was very wroth: But his Wrath, it

“ seems, he kept to himself; he shew’d  
“ no Tokens of it to the *Offender*; and  
“ therefore *Absalom*, when he saw his  
“ Father conniving at the Thing, under-  
“ took to do himself Justice, and to  
“ avenge the Dishonour done to his  
“ Family.

“ **I**N this however he acted very wick-  
“ edly: But then, why did not his Fa-  
“ ther call him to an Account for it?  
“ Why did he suffer him (d) to escape  
“ into *Geshur*, and not immediately send  
“ Messengers to apprehend him? Instead  
“ of demanding him of the King of *Ge-*  
“ *shur*, in order to bring him to Justice,  
“ the Historian tells us, that (e) the *Soul*  
“ of *King David* long’d to go forth unto  
“ *Absalom*; and that, not long after,  
“ upon a very frivolous Pretence, viz. the  
“ false and impertinent Tale of a canting  
“ old Woman, he took Occasion to re-  
“ call him; and, when he was recalled,  
“ suffer’d him to launch into greater Ex-  
“ travagancies, than ever *Prince* had done  
“ before.

“ **I**T is not much to be wonder’d at,  
“ that a young Prince, of a proud, am-  
“ bitious Spirit, with all this Impunity  
“ and Encouragement, should come at  
“ last to affect the Government, and de-  
“ pose his Father; but certainly *David*  
“ appears to be a very weak Man, when  
“ he gives his *Generals* this Charge con-  
“ cerning a Rebel in Arms against him;  
“ (f) *Deal gently, for my Sake, with the*  
“ young

9 K

Fear of enraging the People against him. Some, however, are of a quite contrary Opinion, viz. that *David*, who lamented him with such Excess, remov’d him from this Pit, in order to have him laid in the Sepulchre belonging to the Kings, or perhaps somewhere about the Place, where the Monument, which goes under his Name, and, even to this Day, is shewn to Travellers, was dug in a Rock. It is a little Chamber, wrought with a Chisel, out of one Piece of Rock, which stands at some Distance from the rest of the Mountain, and is a Square of eight Paces from Out to Out. The Inside of this Chamber is all plain, but the Outside is adorn’d with some Pillars of the same Kind of Stone. The Upper Part, or Covering is made in the Form of a Conick Pyramid, pretty high and large, with a Kind of Flower-Pot on its Top. The Pyramid is compos’d of several Stones, but the Monument itself is square, and all cut out of one Block. In the Time of *Josephus*, the Monument, which was said to be *Absalom*’s, was nothing more, than one Marble Pillar, widely different from what, at present, goes under his Name, and which therefore must be accounted a more modern Building. *Le Clerc*’s and *Patrick*’s Commentaries, *Jewish Antiq.* lib. vii. cap. 9. and *Calmet*’s Dictionary, under the Word *Absalom*.

(c) 2 Sam. xiii. 21.

(d) Ver. 37.

(e) Ver. 39.

(f) Ibid. xviii. 5.



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

“ young Man, even with *Abfalom*: And  
“ *Joab* seems to be no very good Subject,  
“ when, notwithstanding the King’s  
“ Command, (g) *he took three Darts in*  
“ *his Hand, and thrust them through the*  
“ *Heart of Abfalom*. But in this he  
“ might the rather presume upon being  
“ pardon’d by a Man, who had pass’d  
“ by his base and treacherous Murther  
“ of *Abner*, without the least Censure,  
“ or Rebuke.

“ To be a *Terror to Evil-workers*,  
“ even tho’ they be our nearest Friends  
“ and Relations, and to be kind and  
“ merciful to such, as behave gallantly,  
“ even tho’ they be our greatest Enemies,  
“ are no improper Rules of Conduct in  
“ any great Prince: And yet how very  
“ reverse were *David’s* Actions to these,  
“ when we find him winking at Murther  
“ at home, and pursuing, with the most  
“ exquisite Tortures, such People, as  
“ oppos’d his Measures by fighting for  
“ their Liberty, abroad.

“ For what can we say, for his put-  
“ ting the Inhabitants of *Rabbah*, as  
“ well as the other Cities of the *Ammo-*  
“ *nites*, (h) *under Saws, and under Har-*  
“ *rows, and under Axes, and making them*  
“ *pass through the Brick-kiln*? What shall  
“ we say, to his making War against  
“ *Ishboseth*, *Saul’s* Son and Heir, when  
“ himself (i) had sworn to the Father,  
“ that he would *not cut off his Seed*, or  
“ destroy any of his Family? What shall  
“ we say, to his taking the Advantage of  
“ *Abner’s* Resentment (k) to draw him  
“ aside from his Master’s Service, and  
“ to enter into *League* (for the Promotion  
“ of his own Cause) with a very wicked  
“ Man? And lastly, what shall we say,  
“ (l) to his obliging *Hushai* to use all  
“ Manner of Falshood to *Abfalom*; to  
“ act the *Hypocrite*, and tell innumerable  
“ Lies, on purpose to get into his Confi-  
“ dence, and so betray his Counsels?  
“ These, and several other Instances,  
“ that might be produc’d in this Period of

History, are enough to convince us, From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.  
“ that, how much soever *David’s* Piety  
“ and Righteousness may be extoll’d by  
“ some; in his *publick* Capacity he was a  
“ weak Prince, and, in his *private*, a bad  
“ Ruler of his Family; *partial* to his  
“ Friends, *cruel* to his Enemies, *false* to  
“ his Promises, *unjust* in his Distributions,  
“ and *deceitful* in his Transactions with  
“ Mankind; *guilty* of Murther and  
“ Adultery himself, and a *tame* Con-  
“ niver at those, who committed the like  
“ Offences.

“ But well may the *Historian* leave  
“ these Imputations upon *David’s* Cha-  
“ racter, when he is not afraid to load  
“ *Almighty* God with an Accusation of  
“ *captious* Cruelty. For what less can  
“ we call (m) his *striking Uzzah dead*  
“ upon the Spot, merely for putting out  
“ his Hand, and laying hold on the Ark,  
“ (which, some would be apt to think,  
“ proceeded from Respect and Reverence,  
“ more than any Profanation of it) when,  
“ by the Stumbling of the Oxen, it was in  
“ Danger of being overturn’d; and when  
“ he is not ashamed to relate such incon-  
“ gruous and incredible Things, (n) *as*  
“ *the Sound of Men’s* marching upon the  
“ *Tops of Mulberry-Trees*; as (o) the ex-  
“ travagant Story of a *Crown*, (*worn by the*  
“ *King of Rabbah*, and afterwards by  
“ *David*) which weigh’d an hundred and  
“ twenty-five Pounds, more than any  
“ human Neck could bear; and of (p)  
“ an Head of Hair belonging to *Abfalom*,  
“ whose very *Clippings* came to no less  
“ than four Pounds, and two Ounces of  
“ our Weight; with some other *Abfur-*  
“ *dities* of the like Nature?”

*DAVID*, no doubt, was a very fond Answer’d, by  
showing how  
David had so  
many Wives.  
Father to his Children, and a tender Hus-  
band to his Wives: Of these, it must be  
own’d, he had too many, *eighteen* in  
Number, if we will reckon his *Concubines*  
into that *Relation*, which, in those Days,  
did not much differ from the *other*, except  
in some Rites and Solemnities of Mar-  
riage.

(g) 2 Sam. xviii. 14.  
xv. 34.

(h) Ibid. xii. 31.

(m) Ibid. vi. 7.

(n) Ibid. v. 24.

(i) 1 Sam. xxiv. 21, 22.

(k) 2 Sam. iii. 13.

(l) Ibid.

(o) Ibid. xii. 30.

(p) Ibid. xiv. 26.



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riage. But, as *Polygamy* was then tolerated among the *Jews*, (q) and the Prohibition of a *King's multiplying Wives to himself* does no where limit the Number of them, *David* might conceive, that this *Polygamy* was no Transgression of the Law, and thence be induc'd more readily to comply with it, in order to enlarge his Family, and attach the principal Nobility of his own Nation, as well as some foreign *Potentates* more closely to his Interest. (r) For it was always look'd upon as a Piece of *political* Wisdom in Princes to endeavour to have many Children, that, by matching them into several powerful Families, they might have more *Supporters* of their Authority, and more Assistance, in Case of any Invasion of it.

His Indulgence  
to his Children  
excus'd.

THIS however is no Part of *David's* Commendation, how much soever it might tend to his Security: But that a Father should be *fond* of a Son, and, in some Instances, carry that Fondness to Excess; that he should be blind to his *lesser* Faults, and always inclinable, upon proper Tokens of Repentance, to forgive the *greater*; that he should love to see every Thing look *gay* and *handsome* about him, be liberal to his decent *Expences*, and ready to overlook some little *Extravagances*; that he should be *uneasy* in his Absence, *joyous* to see him, and when he is in any imminent Danger, very *sollicitous* for his Preservation (which are all the Articles, brought against *David*, in Relation to his Son *Abjalom*): These are Faults (if Faults they be) which every *good-natur'd* Parent, who feels the tender Propensities of human Nature towards those of *his own Flesh*, will easily be induc'd to forgive: And well were it for *David*, if we could make the like *Apology* for that great Enormity

of his, in the Matter of *Uriah*; but, \* *From 2 Sam. i. to xix.* instead of attempting any Extenuation of it, we shall rather take Notice of the several Aggravations, which *Moralists* have discover'd in it, and of the Reasons, for which the Spirit of God thought proper to record it in Holy Writ.

To this Purpose, some have observ'd, *The several Aggravations of his Crime.* 1st, That, (s) as *David* tarried at Jerusalem, at the Time, when Kings went forth to Battle, he there indulg'd himself in Ease and Luxury, (which are the Bane and Rust of the Mind) and so insensibly fell into those loose Desires, which drew him into such vile Perpetrations; so that the first Cause of his Sin was *Idleness*. 2d, They observe it, as an Aggravation of his Crime, (t) that he certainly knew that *Bathsheba* was another Man's Wife, and yet deliberately and advisedly committed the Sin; nay, that she was the Wife of one, who was a *Profelyte* to the *Jewish* Religion, and therefore added Scandal to his Wickedness, or (as the Text expresses it) (u) gave great Occasion to the Enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. 3d, They observe, that there was Perfidy added to this Guilt, and a sinful Contrivance, (x) in causing *Uriah* to be sent for home; in receiving him with great Tokens of his Favour; and in entertaining him with good Cheer, that he might be the more desirous to enjoy the Company of his Wife, and so have the Child, which was got in Adultery, reputed his own. 4th, They observe, (y) from *Uriah's* Answer, that, had not *David's* Heart been fear'd, he could not but have felt a strong Remorse upon thinking how he had abus'd so brave a Man, and how he indulg'd himself in sinful Pleasures, while this Man, and the rest of his Army gloriously endur'd all Manner of Hardships, for

(q) Deut. xvii. 17.

(r) Patrick's Commentary on 2 Sam. v. 13.

\* But, contrary to this, the *Jewish* Writers have endeavour'd to justify *David* in this whole Transaction; and, to this Purpose, have invented Laws and Customs, that are no where to be found, either in the Books of *Moses*, or in the Compacts of their History. They pretend that *David* was marry'd to *Bathsheba* before her Husband was dead, because it was a Custom (as they say) for Soldiers, whenever they went to the Wars, to give their Wives a Bill of Divorcement, and consequently, a full Licence to marry whom they pleas'd. But 'tis in vain to attempt to excuse this black and crying Sin in *David*, for which God so severely punish'd him, and for which he himself was always ready to acknowledge the Divine Justice in so doing. Calmet's Commentary on 2 Sam. xi. 27.

(s) 2 Sam. xi. 1.

(t) Ibid.

(u) Ibid. xii. 14.

(x) Ibid. xi. 6, &c.

(y) Ibid. xi. 11.



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for the Service of their Country. 5th, They observe, (z) from his Design upon *Uriah's* Life, when he could not otherwise conceal his Lewdness, how naturally one Sin paves the Way to another, and how, in a small Compass of Time, the *Fascination* of sensual Appetites is enough to change the very Nature of Mankind; since even he, who formerly spar'd *Saul*, unjustly seeking his Life, is now put upon contriving the Death of a very faithful Servant, in a very base and unworthy Manner. 6th, They observe it, as a farther Aggravation of his Crime of Murder, that he not only expos'd an innocent and faithful Servant to be kill'd, but that, together with him, (a) several more brave Men, *set in the Front of the Battle*, where the Service was hottest, must necessarily have fallen in the Attack; so blind was he to the *publick Good*, and so prodigal of his Subjects Lives, if he might but cover his Guilt, and gratify his Lust. 7th, They observe, (b) from his Answer to the Messengers, sent by *Joab* to acquaint him with *Uriah's* Death, *viz. the Sword devoureth one, as well as another*, the vile Hypocrisy and Obdurateness of his Heart, imputing that to the *Chance of War*, or rather to the Direction of *Divine Providence*, which his Conscience could not but tell him, was of his own *Contrivance*. 8th, and lastly, they observe, (c) from his Marriage with *Bathsheba*, even before her Husband was cold in his Grave, how the Eagerness of his indulg'd Appetite had now extinguish'd (what in some Sinners is last of all parted with, and for which he himself had lately embro'd his Hands in Blood) all Sense of Shame and Regard to Reputation, or Decency.

THESE are some of the Aggravations observable in *David's* Crime, which (besides his Lust and Cruelty) is loaded with too just an Imputation of Perfidy, of Ingratitude, of Hypocrisy, of Deliberation, of Obstinacy, and of Shamelessness in Sin: And for these Purposes were they recorded

in Scripture, that they might teach us the Frailty of human Nature, and how liable the best of Men are, in some Instances of their Lives, to be overtaken with very gross Faults: That they might shew us the natural Gradation of one Sin to another, and that, when once we have suffer'd our Appetites to *out-ray*, in a short Time it will not be in our Power to set Bounds to them, would we never so fain: That they might caution us against Sloth and Idleness, against indulging any inordinate Passion, or gazing upon any Objects, that may endanger our Innocence: That they might remind us all, how much we stand in need continually of the Divine Assistance, and therefore how much we are concern'd to *pray with all Prayer and Supplication*, and to *watch*, as well as *pray*, that we *fall into no Temptation*: And lastly, that they might inculcate that excellent Precept which the Apostle has laid down in these Words; — (d) *Brethren, if any Man be overtaken in a Fault, ye, that are spiritual, restore such an one in the Spirit of Meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*

ONE pernicious Consequence of *David's* Transgression very likely was, that it made him timorous in inflicting Punishments upon others; but the Reason which *Josephus* assigns for his not chastising *Amnon* for his incestuous Rape, *viz. because he was his eldest Son, and he loved him, and would not displease him*, is a groundless Calumny, and mere Fiction; for (e) since the sacred History has thought fit to be silent in this Matter, no one can tell what his Father either said, or did to him. The true Reason therefore, as we suppose, why his Father did not proceed with Severity against him, was, because the Case (as it then stood) was intricate and perplex, and such as the Law had made no Provision for. The Law concerning *Rapes* is worded thus; — (f) *If a Damself, that is a Virgin, be betrothed unto a Husband, and a Man find her in the City, and lie*

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

Why they are  
recorded in  
Scripture.

(z) 2 Sam. xi. 15.  
vi. 1.

(a) Ibid. ver. 15.

(c) Le Clerc's Commentary on 2 Sam. xiii. 21.

(b) Ibid. ver. 25.

(f) Deut. xxii. 23, &c.

(d) Ibid. ver. 27.

(e) Gal.



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*lie with her; then ye shall bring them both out unto the Gate of the City, and ye shall stone them with Stones that they die: The Damsel, because she cried not, being in the City; and the Man, because he hath humbled his Neighbour's Wife: And again, If a Man find a Damsel, that is a Virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; then the Man, that lay with her, shall give unto the Damsel's Father fifty Shekels of Silver, and she shall be his Wife, because he hath humbled her; he may not put her away all his Days.* These are the two principal Laws concerning this Matter, but neither come up to the Case now before us. For, had *David* punish'd *Amnon's* Crime with Death, as the former Law requires, *Tamar*, in like Manner, must have suffer'd too, (even tho' she was innocent) because *she cried not out*; and tho' she was not a *betrothed Damsel*, (as the Case is put in the latter Law) yet *David* could not compel *Amnon* to marry her, because such a Marriage would have been *incestuous*; and therefore we may suppose, that tho' *David* might reprimand his Son very severely for having wrought Folly in Israel, yet he could not bring him before a publick Judicature, because the Law did not properly extend to his Case, or if he had made it extend, the Innocent must have suffer'd with the Guilty; and (g) a Rule of Equity I think it is, rather to let the Guilty escape, than that the Innocent and Injur'd should be destroy'd.

Nor Absalom  
for murdering  
him.

THE sacred Historian has taken Care to clear *David* from any base Connivance at *Absalom's* Wickedness in murdering his Brother *Amnon*, by telling us, that as soon as he had done it, (b) *he fled, and went to Talmai*, his Grand-Father by his Mother's Side, who was then King of *Geshur*. *Geshur* was a City in *Syria*, which lay on the other Side of *Jordan*; and *Absalom*, who meditated the Murther of his Brother, and could not but foresee that it would be an Act of high Displeasure to his Father,

invit ' the Princes of the Blood to his Cour. -Seat, which was (i) near the City *phraim*, not far from the River *Jordan*, that he might have a better Opportunity, not only for putting in Execution his wicked Design, but of making his Escape likewise: So that *David* (had he been ever so much minded) could not possibly have apprehended him, before he had got to a safe Retreat; and where, it is easy to imagine, he would tell his Tale so well, as to gain his Grand-Father's Protection, if not Approbation of the Fact, which, with a small Share of Eloquence, might be so set off, as to appear a necessary Vindication of the Honour of their Family, which had been so grossly violated.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xiv.

THE Law of God indeed is very express: — (k) *Whosoever sheddeth Man's Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed*; (l) *neither shall ye take any Satisfaction for the Life of a Murtherer, which is guilty of Death, but he shall surely be put to Death*. Whereby it appears, that the Supreme Magistrate was oblig'd to execute Justice upon all wilful Murtherers without any Reservation; nor had *David* any Power to dispense with God's Laws, or to spare those, whom he had commanded him to destroy. But then it must be consider'd, that the Affront, which *Amnon* put upon *Absalom*, was very great and heinous; that *Absalom*, at this Time, was out of the Reach of *David's* Justice, and so would have continu'd, had he not obtain'd a Promise of Impunity; that, by living an Exile in an *heathenish* Country, *David* had Reason to apprehend, that his Son was in Danger of being infected with their wicked and *idolatrous* Practices, and was therefore the rather inclin'd to recal him; and that the Clamours and Importunities of the People, which *Joab* procur'd this Woman of *Tekoah* to represent to the King in a very free and artful Manner, did almost compel him to do it: For, what he said in the Case of *Joab's* Murther of *Abner*, viz. that he could not revenge it, because

Why he recal-  
led him.

9 L

(m) the

(g) The History of the Life of King David.  
xi. 54.

(k) Gen. ix. 6.

(l) Numb. xxxv. 31.

(b) 2 Sam. xiii. 37.

(i) Ibid. ver. 23. Vide John



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(m) *the Sons of Zeruah were too hard for him*; the like, very probably, might have been said in this Case, where the People's Hearts were so strongly, and so universally set upon *Abfalom*; and that the rather, because his long Banishment mov'd their Pity, and his Absence made them more impatient for his Return. The Eyes of all, in short, were upon him, as the next Heir, as a wife, and gallant, and amiable Prince, unhappy only in this Instance of killing *Amnon*, for which he had a sufficient Provocation; and therefore, to satisfy the Cries of the People, as well as to provide for the Security of his Kingdom, which seem'd to depend on the Establishment of the Succession in *Abfalom*, *David* was oblig'd to forgive him, and recal him. And, when he was recall'd, and re-instated in the King's Favour, 'tis no Wonder that a young Prince, of his gay Temper, should multiply his *Attendants*, and set up a rich *Equipage*, to attract the Eyes and Admiration of Mankind; or that his Father, whose Riches so well enabled him to bear the Expence of this Magnificence, and whose Heart rejoic'd perhaps to see his Son the *Favourite* of the People, did not restrain him in it; because a Man of an open Spirit himself loves to see his Children make a Figure in Life, which, in all *Eastern* Countries, was a Thing customary, and might here more especially be expected in the *eldest*, and Heir *presumptive* to the Crown.

And desired his  
Life to be  
spar'd.

(n) SOME of the *Jewish* Doctors tell us, that, how indulgent soever *David* might be to his Son *Abfalom*, he never intended him for his Successor in the Kingdom; that he had all along made a Promise to *Bathsheba*, his favourite Queen, (which Promise, tho' (o) recorded later in the History, might at first come to *Abfalom's* Ear) that her Son *Solomon* should succeed in the Regal Dignity; and that *Abfalom*, both from a Consciousness of his own Demerits, and of the *Superiority* of Wisdom and Piety, that appear'd in *Solo-*

*mon*, perceiving that his Father intended to postpone him, and instate the other, enter'd into this Rebellion, in order to assert his *Birth-right* to the Crown. But the Fault in *David* was not any Exclusion of Right, but too blind an Indulgence to his Son, even while he was in Arms against him, ready to kill, and resolv'd to depose him: *Spare ye the young Man*, says he; and this he might desire, partly from a Consciousness of his own Sin in the Case of *Uriah*, which was the *meritorious* and *procuring* Cause of the Rebellion, in which his Son was unhappily engag'd; partly from a Consideration of his *Youth*, which is commonly foolish and giddy, and subject to evil Counsels, and therefore deserves Pity; and partly from a Sense of Piety in himself, as being unwilling that he should be cut off in a sinful Rebellion, without any Space, or Means of Repentance.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

THESE might be some of the Reasons, that made *David* give his Army so strict a Charge, not to kill his Son, in Case they should take him: But *Joab* had quite different Sentiments of the Matter. He perceived, that there could be no Safety to the King, nor Peace to the Kingdom, no Security to himself, or other loyal Subjects, as long as *Abfalom* lived; that, notwithstanding this unnatural Rebellion, the King was still inclinable to forgive him, and that there would always be some unquiet People, that would be moving fresh Disturbances, in order to set him on the Throne. Looking upon this Charge therefore, as an Order, more proper for a *Parent*, than a *Prince*, he adventured to disobey it. For he thought with himself, (p) that the King ought not to be observ'd in an Affair, wherein he shew'd more Regard to his *private* Passion, than to the *publick* Good; that Fathers should always sacrifice their *paternal* Tenderness to the Interest of the Government; and that, as *Abfalom* had forfeited his Life to the Laws upon several Ac-

And why Joab  
might think  
proper to kill  
him.

(m) 2 Sam. iii. 30.

(n) Pool's Annotations on 2 Sam. xv. 7.  
Commentary on 2 Sam. xviii. 14.

(o) 1 Kings i. 30.

(p) Calmer's



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counts, it was but Justice now to take this Opportunity of dispatching him, as an Enemy to his King and Country: But whether, in this Act of Disobedience to the Royal Command, *Joab* is perfectly to be vindicated, we shall not pretend to determine. 'Tis certain, that he was a Person of a bold Temper, high Passions, and fiery Resentments; that valued himself upon the Services, he had done the King, and seemed not to be much afraid of his Authority.

Why David  
did not punish  
him for the  
Murder of  
Abner.

THE Complaint, which *David* makes to some of his Courtiers, upon this *General's* murdering the famous *Abner*, declares the true Reason, why he could not, at that Time, put the Laws in Execution against him: — (q) *Know ye not*, says he, *that there is a Prince, and a great Man fallen this Day in Israel? And I am this Day weak, tho' anointed King; and these Men, the Sons of Zeruiah, be too hard for me: The Lord shall reward the Doer of Evil according to his Wickedness.* *Joab* was *David's* Sister's Son, or Nephew, (r) who had stuck close to him in all his Adversity, an excellent Soldier himself, and a Man of great Power and Authority among the Army; so that, had *David* immediately called him to Justice for this vile Act against *Abner*, such was his Interest among the *Soldiery*, that he soon would have caused a Mutiny or Revolt, and found a Means to shock or unhinge the Government, that was not, as yet, sufficiently established. It was a Point of Prudence therefore in *David*, to delay the Punishment of so powerful, and so perilous a Man, until a more convenient Season, and only, for the present, to express his Detestation of the Deed, by commending the *Deceas'd*, condemning the *Murder*, and commanding the *Murderer* (by Way of Penance) to attend the *Funeral* in Sackcloth, and other Ensigns of Mourning.

So far is *David* from winking at *Abner's* Murder, that we find him burying

him with great Solemnity, and making mournful Lamentation over his Grave; praising his Valour, and other great Qualities publicly, and cursing the Author of his untimely Death: (s) *I, and my Kingdom*, says he, *are guiltless before the Lord for ever from the Blood of Abner, the Son of Ner: Let it rest on the Head of Joab, and on all his Father's House, and let there not fail from the House of Joab one, that hath an Issue, or that is a Leper, or that leaneth on a Staff, or that falleth on the Sword, or that lacketh Bread.*

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

BUT what Apology shall we make for his treating the *Ammonites* so inhumanly, and putting them to such exquisite Torments, only for a small Indignity, which a young King, at the Instigation of some evil Counsellors, put upon his *Embassadors*, since their seems to be no Proportion between the *Affront*, and the *Revenge*, between the one's having their *Beards* and *Clothes* cut a little shorter, and the other's being put under *Saws* and *Harrowes*, or thrown into hot burning Furnaces? Had *David* indeed been the Inventor of such frightful Punishments, we might have justly reckon'd him a Man of the same cruel and brutal Spirit, as was *Caligula*, who, in After-Ages, (as (t) *Suetonius* tells us) was wont to take a great Delight in inflicting them: But, the Truth is, that these were the Punishments, which the *Ammonites* inflicted upon the *Jews*, whenever they took them Prisoners; and therefore *David*, when he conquer'd their Country, and reduc'd their capital City, us'd them with the like Cruelty: Not every one of them indiscriminately, but such only as appear'd in Arms against him, and had either advis'd, or approv'd the Advice of putting such a Disgrace upon his Messengers.

Why he was  
so cruel to the  
Ammonites.

THE *Ammonites* 'tis certain, were early initiated into all the Cruelties of the People of *Canaan*: When they infested *Jabesh-Gilead*, and the Besieg'd made an Offer to surrender,

(q) 2 Sam. iii. 38.  
(r) Cap. xxvii.

(s) Patrick's Commentary on 2 Sam. iii. 39.

(t) 2 Sam. iii. 23, 29.



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surrender, the easiest Condition that they would grant them, was, that they might (u) thrust out all their right Eyes, and lay it for a Reproach upon Israel for ever; which one Instance, as I take it, is in the Room of ten Thousand Proofs, to demonstrate, that these *Ammonites* were Monsters of Barbarity; and that therefore King *David* was no more culpable for retaliating upon them the same Cruelties, that they us'd to inflict on others, than the People of *Agrigentum* were, for burning *Phalaris* in his own *Bull*, or *Theseus* the Hero, for stretching *Procrustes* beyond the Dimensions of his own *Bed*. For even *Heathen* Casuists have determin'd, that no Law can be more just and equitable, than that, which decreed *Artists of Cruelty to perish by their own Arts*.

THE particular Punishment of passing through the *Brick-Kilns*, an ingenious (x) Author seems fairly to account for, by making this Conjecture. — “ It is very well known says he, that the *Jews* were Slaves in *Egypt*, and particularly employ'd in Brick-making. Now it is natural for all People at Enmity to reproach one another with the Meanness and Baseness of their Original. As therefore the *Ammonites* were a cruel and insolent Enemy, and nothing could be more natural for Men of their Temper, when they had got any *Jews* in their Power, than to cry out, send the Slaves to the Brick-Kilns, and so torture them to Death; so nothing could be more natural than for the *Jews*, when they got an Advantage over them, to return them the same Treatment.” However this be, 'tis certain that the Siege of *Rabbah* began before *David* had any criminal Commerce with *Bathsheba*, and if the Town was not taken till after *Solomon's* Birth, (as the Sequel of his History seems to imply) the Siege must last for about two Years; in which Time, upon the Supposition that *David* continu'd in an obdurate State of

Sin and Impenitence, and was therefore From a Sam. i. to xix. depriv'd of that mild and merciful Spirit, for which he had formerly been so remarkable; there is no Wonder, if being now become cruel and hard-hearted, as well as exasperated with the Length of the Siege, he treated the *Ammonites* in the same outrageous Manner, that they were accusom'd to treat his Subjects, not only to retaliate the Thing upon them, but to deter all future Ages likewise from violating the Right of Nations, by treating the Persons of publick Embassadors with Contempt.

THAT the Rights of *Embassadors* are guarded by all Laws, both Divine and Human, and that therefore a Violation of these Rights is not only unjust, but impious, is the general Sentiments of all the most able (y) Writers upon the Laws and Constitutions of *Civil Government*. So tender were the *Romans* in this particular, (z) that they appointed twenty *Feciales* (as they call'd those Officers) to inspect their good Usage, and preserve their Immunities; to make them immediate Reparation, when any Injury was done them; and, in Case of a *personal* Affront or Indignity, to deliver up the Offender, even tho' he were a Noble or a *Patrician* by Birth, into the Hands of the Nation, from whence the Embassador came, to be treated by them, as they thought fit. And therefore, we need less wonder, that King *David*, who in all his Actions was a nice Observer of every Punctilio in publick Honour, should resent, in so high a Manner, an Indignity, the greatest that could be offer'd, put upon his *Ministers*, and from them reflecting upon his own Majesty, merely for sending a kind Complement of *Condolence* to a foolish Prince, (as he prov'd) upon the Death of a very worthy Father.

A MAN so zealous for his own Honour as well as for the Right of Nations, in his publick Capacity, can hardly be presum'd to be an Abettor of *Perfidy* in his more private. We must therefore suppose, that

(u) 1 Sam. xi. 2.  
senders, &c.

(x) The History of the Life of King *David*.  
(y) Grotius, de Jure Belli, lib. ii. cap. 18.

(y) Vido Grotius, Schlen, Pu.



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that, notwithstanding his War with *Ishbosheth*, wherein there might happen some *Skirmishes*, he still kept his Promise with his Father *Saul*, *not to destroy any of his Family*; and therefore in the whole Compass of the War (in which, tho' it lasted seven Years, we no where read of one Battle fought) he acted in the *defensive*, not *offensive* Part, and kept an Army by him, not to destroy *Saul's* Posterity, but merely to maintain himself in the Possession of that *regal* Dignity, wherewith *Samuel*, by God's Order and Appointment, had invested him.

*ISHBOSHETH* knew very well, that *Samuel* had anointed *David*, and that God had appointed him to be his Father's Successor in the whole Kingdom of *Israel*. And therefore his opposing him in an *hostile* Manner, was Provocation enough, one would think, had not *David* remember'd (a) his Oath made to *Saul*, and thereupon overlook'd this ill Treatment of his Son, and pronounc'd him a (b) *righteous Person*. The Removal of an Adversary, and dangerous Competitor for a Crown, might be thought a meritorious Piece of Service by some ambitious Princes; but *David* was of another Sentiment. His Soul and his Notions were the same, as what inspir'd the great *Alexander*, when he took Vengeance on *Bassus* for having kill'd his Enemy *Darius*; (c) for he did not consider *Darius*, so much in the Capacity of an Enemy, as *Bassus* in that of a Friend to the Person, whom he had basely murder'd. And it is not improbable, that his Reflection upon the sad Fate of *Saul's* unhappy Family, and the solemn Promise he had given for their Preservation, as well as the Design (d) of clearing himself from the least Suspicion of having any Hand in this barbarous Regicide, prevail'd with *David* to inflict upon the Authors of it, the exemplary Punishment of hanging them upon

Gibbets, to be a Spectacle of Abhorrence; of cutting off their right Hands, (e) wherewith they had committed this execrable Deed, and of cutting off their Feet, wherewith they had made their Escape from Justice.

*ABNER* indeed acted very basely, *Why he might make use of Abner's Offer*, very treacherously, in deserting *Ishbosheth* (the King whom he had set up) upon a very slight Provocation; but *David* had no Concern in all this. The Kingdom belong'd to him by *Divine* Donation. *Abner* knew this, before he proclaim'd *Ishbosheth*; and therefore all the Mischiefs of the *civil* War are chargeable upon him: Nor can *David* be blam'd for receiving his own Right, even tho' it was tender'd to him by the Hand of a bad Man. The Truth is, *David* did not delude *Abner* from his Master, but *Abner* made the first Overture of his Service to him; and as this was no unfavourable Opportunity of uniting the two contending Kingdoms, which Providence seem'd to have thrown in his Way, *David* had been perfidious, not only to his own Interest, but to the Establishment of the general Peace of the Nation, had he not fallen in with it. (f) He, no doubt, was privy to the Cause of *Abner's* Disgust; But, without approving either of his Crime or his Treason, he might lawfully make use of the *Traitor*; nay, and confer on him some Tokens of his Favour too, in Consideration of the Benefits he had receiv'd from him, and of some commendable Qualities, either *natural* or *political*, that he had observ'd in him. The Instrument is not to be regarded in all Actions, and even a bad Man, when he does good Services, may merit a Reward, and be receiv'd with some Approbation.

No Man indeed should engage another in a base or wicked Action; (g) because, whether he commits the Thing himself,

9 M

or

(a) 1 Sam. xxiv. 21. (b) 2 Sam. iv. 11. (c) Reputabat enim non tam hostem suum fuisse *Darium*, quam Amicum ejus, à quo esset occisus. *Justin*, lib. xii. c. 6. (d) *Le Clerc's* Commentary. (e) *Patrick's* Commentary. (f) *Calmet's* Commentary on 2 Sam. iii. 12. (g) Nihil interest, utrum ipse Scelus admittas, an alium propter temittere vellis. *August. in Moribus Manicheæ*.



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or employs another to do it, the Crime is the same; but it is not so (says *(b)* *Grotius*) if a Person freely offers himself, without any Sollicitation or Persuasion to it. In this Case, it is not unlawful to use him as an Instrument, in order to execute what is confessedly lawful for us to do: And, as it is not contrary to the Laws of Arms to receive a *Defserter*, who quits the Enemy's Party and embraces Ours; so we cannot perceive, how *David* could become culpable in taking the Advantage of *Abner's* Quarrel with *Ishboseth*, when, without any Application of his, he voluntarily sent to him, and offer'd him his Service, and when the good Providence of God seems to have employ'd the Passion and angry Resentment of that haughty *General*, in order to bring about his wise Designs, and by the Union of the two Kingdoms, prevent the Effusion of much Blood.

His employing  
Hushai to sup-  
plant Abia-  
lom.

BUT what shall we say in Excuse for his *Perfidy*, when we find him putting his Friend *Hushai* upon acting such a Part, as but badly became a Man of Honour; upon going, and offering his Service to his Son *Absalom*, on purpose to betray him, or to give him bad Counsel. The Words of *David* are these:—*(i)* *If thou return to the City, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy Servant, O King; as I have been thy Father's Servant hitherto, so will I now also be thy Servant; then mayst thou for me defeat the Counsels of Abitophel.* But *David*, by these Words, (say some Interpreters) did not advise *Hushai* to betray *Absalom*, or, for his Sake, to violate the Laws of Friendship, but purely to go and adjoin himself to *Absalom*, (who, by this Time, had assum'd the Title of King, and could not properly be address'd to without calling him so) in order to destroy the Counsels of *Abitophel*, just as a General sends his Spies into the Enemy's Camp, to know what passes there; or as a King keeps in foreign Courts his Envoys, to gain Intelligence of the Designs, that may be form'd against him, and to defeat the

Resolutions, that may be taken to his Prejudice. But (whether these Comparisons may come up to the Case before us, or no) it was certain, at this Juncture, *Absalom's* Business was to be upon his Guard. The unjust War, which he had declar'd against his Father, gave his Father a Right to treat him as an open Enemy, and to employ either Force or Artifice against him; nor can this Conduct of his be blam'd, unless we should say, that, when Kings are engag'd in War, they are forbidden to disguise their true Designs, even tho' it be a Thing notorious, that upon this Disguise the Practice of *Stratagems* in War (which were never yet accounted unlawful) is entirely founded.

THE Truth is, *(k)* *Absalom*, as a Traitor, a Murderer, a Rebel, and, as far as in him lay, a Patricide, had forfeited all the Rights of Society, but more especially, as a Rebel: For a Rebel, who sets himself to overturn the establish'd Government, Order, and Peace of any Community, does by that hostile Attempt actually divest himself of all social Rights in that Community. And consequently, *David* could be no more guilty of *Perfidy*, in forming a Design to supplant *Absalom*, nor *Hushai* guilty of Villany, in undertaking to put it in Execution; than that Man can be said to be guilty of Sin, who deceives a Mad-Man, and turns him away from murdering his best Friends.

THE Short of the Matter is, *Hushai's* Instructions, were to negotiate *David's* Interest among the Rebels, as well as he could. This he could not do without seeming to act in a contrary Character; and in Order to effect this, there was a Necessity for his concealing himself; and conceal himself he could not, without some Degree of *Diffimulation*; and therefore, the End which he propos'd in what he did, viz. the Prevention of that long Train of Mischiefs which always attends a Civil War, was sufficient to justify the Means

From 2 Sam.  
1. to xix.

(b) De Jure Belli, lib. iii. cap. 1. Transfugam jure Belli recipimus. *Grotius.*  
History of the Life of King David, Vol. III.

(i) 2 Sam. xv. 34.

(k) The



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1055. &c.

*Means which he took to accomplish it. For, tho' it is to be wish'd with (l) Cicero, that all Lying and Dissimulation were utterly banished from human Life; yet, as others have maintain'd, that a beneficial Falsehood is better than a destructive Truth, a Case may be so circumstantiated, as to make Dissimulation, which (as (m) Lord Bacon says) is nothing else but a necessary Dependant upon Silence, highly necessary; and a Lie, which otherwise would be blameable in a Slave, will deserve Commendation, (says (n) Quintilian) when a wise Man makes Use of it, to save his Country by deceiving his Enemy. Now, as Hushai's whole Design was to deceive an open and declar'd Enemy, who can doubt, but that he was at full Liberty by his Address and Subtilty to disconcert the Measures of those, whom all agree, that, had he been so minded, he had Licence to attack with open Violence? (o) To overcome an Enemy indeed by Valour, rather than Art, sounds more gallant, and by some has been thought a more + reputable Way of Conquest; but, since the Laws of Nature and Arms have made no Difference, and those of Humanity and Mercy seem to incline to that Side, wherein there is likely to be the least Blood shed; Hushai may be said to have acted the worthy Patriot, as well as the faithful Subject, in breaking the Force of an unnatural Rebellion, and in putting it into his royal Master's Mouth to say, (p) the Lord is known to execute Judgment; the ungodly are trapped in the Work of their own Hands. They are sunk down in the Pit that they made; in the same Net, which they bid privately, are their own Feet taken.*

David's Character.

THUS, tho' we are not oblig'd to vindicate David in every Passage of his Life, and think some of the crying Sins he was

guilty of utterly inexcusable; yet (if we except these) we cannot but think, that, although he was a very tender and indulgent Parent; yet he was no Encourager of Vice in his own Family; or a tame Con- niver at it in others, had he not been restrain'd, by Reasons of State, sometimes from punishing it; that he was true to his Promises, just in his Distributions, and prudent, tho' not crafty, in his mili- tary Transactions; "of a singular Pre- fence of Mind, (as (q) Josephus speaks of him) to make the best of what was before him; and of as sharp a Fore- sight for improving all Advantages, and obviating all Difficulties, that were like to happen;" tender to all Persons in Distress, kind to his Friends, forgiving to his Enemies; and, when, at any Time, he was forc'd to use Severity, 'twas only in Retaliation of what other People had done to him.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

HAPPY were it for us, if we could account for the Operations of God with the same Facility, that we can for the Actions of his Saints; but his Counsels are a great Deep, and his Judgments (just tho' they be) are sometimes obscure, and past finding out. For, what shall we say to the Fate of Uzzah? Or what tolerable Cause can we assign for his sudden and untimely End? It was now near seventy Years since the Israelites had carry'd the Ark from Place to Place, and so long a Disuse had made them forget the Manner of doing it. In Conformity to what they had heard of the Philistines, they put it into a new Cart, or Waggon; but this was against the express Direction of the Law, (r) which order'd it to be borne upon Men's Shoulders. It is commonly suppos'd, that Uzzah was a Levite, tho' there is no Proof of it from Scripture; but

Why God struck Uzzah dead.

(l) Offic. lib. iii. c. 15. (m) Serm. Fidel. lib. vi. (n) Quintil. Instit. Orat. lib. xii. c. 1. (o) Pu-  
fendorf's Law of Nature, lib. iv. c. 1. and Grotius's Rights of Peace, lib. iii. c. 1.

[ Thus when Persius, the Macedonian King, was deceiv'd by the Hopes of Peace, the old Senators disallow'd the Act, as inconsistent with Roman Bravery; saying, That their Ancestors prosecuted their Wars by Valour, not Craft, not like the subtle Carthaginians, or cunning Grecians, among whom it was a greater Glory to overcome their Enemies by Treachery, than true Valour. Livy, lib. xlii. c. 47. And it was a known Principle of Alexander's, that he scorn'd to steal a Victory. Plutarch, de Alex. and 2. Curtius, lib. iv. c. 13.

(p) Psal. ix. 15, 16.

(q) Jewish Antiq. lib. vii. c. 12.

(r) Numb. vii. 9.



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but supposing he was, he had no Right to attend upon the Ark; that Province, by the same Law, (s) was restrain'd to those *Levites* only, who were of the House of *Kobath*: Nay, put the Case he had been a *Kobathite* by Birth, yet he had violated another Command, which prohibited even these *Levites*, (tho' they carry'd it by Staves upon their Shoulders) (t) upon Pain of Death, *to touch it* with their Hands: So that here was a threefold Transgression of the Divine Will, in this Method of Proceeding. The Ark, (as some say) by *Uzzab's* Direction, was plac'd in a *Cart*; *Uzzab*, without any proper Designation, adventures to attend it; when he thought it in Danger of falling, officiously he put forth his Hand, and laid hold on it, (all Violations of the Divine Commands) and this (as is suppos'd) not so much out of Reverence to the sacred *Symbol* of God's Presence, as out of Diffidence of his Providence, as unable to preserve it from overturning.

THE Truth is, this Ark had so long continu'd in Obscurity, that the People in a Manner had lost all Sense of a Divine Power residing in it, and therefore approach'd it with Irreverence. This is imply'd in *David's* Exhortation to *Zadok* and *Abiathar*, after this Misfortune upon *Uzzab*: (u) *Ye are the chief of the Fathers of the Levites; sanctify yourselves therefore, both ye, and your Brethren, that you may bring up the Ark of the Lord God of Israel, unto the Place that I have prepared for it; for, because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a Breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due Order.* What Wonder then, if God, being minded to testify his immediate Presence with the Ark, to retrieve the antient Honour of that sacred *Vessel*, and to curb all licentious Profanations of it for the future, should single out one, that was the most culpable of many, one, who in three Instances was then violating his Commands, to be a Monument of his Displeasure

against either a wilful Ignorance, or a rude Contempt of his Precepts, be they ever so seemingly small; that, by such an Example of *Terror*, he might inspire both Priests and People with a sacred *Dread* of his *Majesty*, and a profound *Veneration* for his *Mysteries*?

GOD indeed is left to his own Pleasure, what Signs he shall think fit to give to his People, upon any Occasion, for their Good; but the more arbitrary, and uncommon any Sign is, the more it seems to have proceeded from God. Tho' therefore, *the Sound of People's going upon the Tops of Trees*, be a Thing not so congruous to our Conceptions, yet it will not therefore follow, that it was not the *real* Sign, which God gave *David*, because the stranger the *Phænomenon* was, the greater Assurance it convey'd of the Divine Interposition in his Favour: Nor can the *Practicableness* of the Thing be disputed, since it was *confessedly* an Host of Angels (who could move on the *Tops of Trees*, as well as plain Ground) that made this Noise of an Army's marching.

THERE is no Reason however to acquiesce in this Construction only. (x) The Word *Beroche*, which we render *Tops*, in several Places of Scripture, signifies the *Beginnings* of Things likewise; and, in this Acceptation, the Sense of the Sign, which God gave *David*, will be this: — “When thou hearest a Sound, “as it were, of many Men marching at “the Entrance of the Place, where the “*Mulberry-Trees* are planted, then do “thou make ready to fall upon thine “Enemy; for this Noise (which is occasion'd by the Ministry of my Angels) “goes before thee, both to conduct thee “in thy Way, and to inject Terror into “thine Adversaries.”

BUT how plausible soever this Interpretation may seem, there is some Reason to suspect, that the other Word *Bochim*, which our Translation calls *Mulberry-Trees*, is, in Reality, the proper Name of a Place.

(y) The

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

The Meaning  
of the Sound in  
the Mulberry-  
Trees.

(t) Numb. vii. 9.  
in Locum.

(s) Ibid. iv. 15.

(u) 1 Chron. xv. 12, 13.

(x) Patrick's Commentary



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(y) The Prophet *Isaiab* has a plain Allusion to this Piece of History, and seems to confirm what we here suggest. *The Lord*, says he, *shall rise up as in Mount Perazim; he shall be wrath as in the Valley of Gibeon*; i. e. he shall destroy his Enemies, as he did the *Philistines* at *Baal-Perazim*, under *David*, and the *Canaanites* at *Gibeon*, under *Joshua*: What hinders then, but that *Beroche Bochim* may signify the Mountains of *Bochim*? And so the Sense of the Words will be, — “When thou hearest a Noise, as of many People marching upon the Hills, or High Places of *Bochim*, then thou hast nothing to do, but to fall immediately upon the Enemy.” Either of these Interpretations clears the Text from any seeming Absurdity; and I shall only observe farther, that, from the Passage of the above cited Prophet, as well as some Expressions in the xviii. Psal. such as, (z) *He sent out his Arrows, and scattered them; he cast forth Lightnings, and destroyed them*, it seems very likely, that a mighty Storm of Thunder and Lightning, of *Hail-Stones* and *Coals of Fire*, (as the *Psalmist* calls it) was assistant to *David* in the Acquisition of this Victory.

The Weight of  
the King of  
Rabbah's  
Crown ac-  
counted for.

IN the Account of *David's* Conquest of the *Ammonites*, the Weight of their King's Crown seems not a little monstrous. The Weight of a Talent, which, upon the lowest Computation, amounts to no less than 123 Pounds, is allow'd to be too much for one Neck to sustain; but then we should consider, that besides the Crown, that was usually worn, it was customary, in some Nations, for Kings to have \* vast large ones, (even to a Size

equal to this) either hung, or supported over the Throne, where, at their Coronation, or upon other solemn Occasions, they were wont to sit.

THE *Jewish* Doctors, indeed have a very odd Conceit, viz. that *David*, when he took this Crown from the King of *Ammon*, hung it up on high by a certain Load-Stone, that he had; as if the Power of the *Magnet* were to attract Gold, as well as Iron. But let that be as it will, 'tis but to suppose, that the Crown, here under Debate, was of this larger Kind, and that, by some Means or other, it was supported over the King's Head, while he was sitting on his Throne, and then there will be an apparent Reason, for taking the Crown from off, or (as the *Hebrew* Words will bear it) from over the King's Head, and placing it, in like Manner, over *David's* Head, even to indicate the Translation of his Kingdom to *David*.

(a) 'Tis a common Thing however in *Hebrew*, as well as other learned Languages, to have the same Word signify both the Weight and Value of any Thing. And that the Price or Worth of the Crown is here the Meaning of the Phrase, we have the more Reason to think, because Mention is made of an Addition of precious Stones, which are never estimated by the Weight of Gold. (b) *Josephus* tells us of one Stone of great Value in the Middle of the Crown, which he calls a *Sardonyx*; and as we may suppose, that there were other Jewels of several Kinds, plac'd at their proper Distances, these, in Proportion as they heighten'd the Value, must lessen the Weight of the Crown, and verify what the same Historian

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

(y) *Isaiab* xxviii. 21.

(z) *Psal.* xviii. 14.

\* The *Antients* make mention of several such large Crowns as these, which were made for Sight more than any Thing else. *Juvenal*, exposing the Pride and Vanity of some of the chief Magistrates at *Rome*, describes the Pomp and Splendor of their Appearance in these Words:

Quod si vidisset prætorem in curribus altis  
Extantem, & medio sublinem in pulvere circi,  
In tunica Jovis, & piæ ferrum terentem  
Ex humeris aulica togæ, magnæque coronæ  
Tantum orbem, quanto cervix non sufficit ulla.

Sat. 10.

*Athenæus* (lib. v. c. 8.) describes a Crown made of Gold, that was four and twenty Foot in Circumference, and mentions others, that were two, some four, and some five Foot deep; as *Pliny*, (lib. xxxiii. c. 3.) in like Manner, takes Notice of some, that were of no less than eight Pound Weight. *Calmet's* Comment. in Locum.

(a) *Pool's* Annotations and *Patrick's* Commentary in Locum.

(b) *Jewish Antiq.* lib. vii. c. 7.



A. M. Historian tells us of it, viz. that David  
 2949, &c. wore it constantly on his Head afterward  
 Ant. Christ. 1055, &c. for an Ornament.

And of Absalom's Head of Hair.

THERE is another Difficulty still behind, which relates to the Weight of *Absalom's* Hair, that in the Words of the Text, is thus express'd: — (c) *And when he polled his Head, (for it was at every Year's End that he polled it; and because the Hair was heavy on him, therefore he polled it) he weighed the Hair of his Head at two hundred Shekels after the King's Weight.* In the Explication of which Words, the Sentiments of the Learned have been so many, and various, that we shall content ourselves with commenting upon some of the chief of them.

Several Opinions concerning it.

THOSE, who are of Opinion, that the Words related only to the *Cuttings* of *Absalom's* Hair, make the *two hundred* Shekels the *Price*, and not the *Weight* of them: And, to this Purpose they suppose, that tho' *Absalom* himself might not sell his Hair, yet some Persons about him might do it, in Complaisance to the Ladies of *Jerusalem*, who might not think themselves in the Fashion unless they wore a favourite Lock of the Prince's. But, besides the Absurdity of the King's Son suffering any of his Domesticks to sell his Hair, the very Words of the Text are a Confutation of this Notion, where they tell us, that *he weighed the Hair of his Head*; whereas, had it been sold, the Buyer must have weigh'd the Money, even (d) as *Abraham* did, when he purchas'd the Field of *Ephron*.

OTHERS again pretend, that there is a manifest Mistake crept into the Text, which has been occasion'd by an ignorant Transcriber's inserting one *numerical* Letter for another, the *Resch* instead of the *Daleth*, i. e. two hundred instead of four: But, besides the Uncertainty, whether the former *Hebrews* made use of their *Letters* instead of *Figures*, (whereof there is not the least Sign or Token in any antient Copies) wherein, I pray, would the great Wonder be, if what was cut off from

*Absalom's* Head, (to thin and shorten his Hair, when it grew too weighty and troublesome to him) amounted to no more than four *Shekels*, which is much about two Ounces? And yet, the whole Design of this Narration seems to portend something more than usual, in this prodigious Increase of *Absalom's* Hair.

THE Text however does not speak of the *Cuttings* of the Hair, but of the Head of Hair itself, when it talks of the Weight of *two hundred Shekels*; and therefore those, who take it in this larger Sense, are not forgetful to remind us, that, in those Days, Hair was accounted a very great Ornament, and the longer it was, the more it was esteem'd; that *Absalom*, to be sure, would not fail to nourish his with the utmost Care, and to let it grow long enough, because it contributed so much to the Gracefulness of his Person; that, in After-Ages (as perhaps they did then) Men were wont to use much Art with their Hair, and dress it every Day with fragrant Ointments, in order to make it grow thick and strong; that the noble Guards, which attended *Solomon* (as *Josephus* (e) informs us) had their long Hair flowing about their Shoulders, which they powder'd with small Particles of Gold, to make it sparkle, and glisten against the Sun; and that, therefore, it is not improbable, that *Absalom*, who himself was a gay young Man, and wanted none of these Helps or Improvements, might, in Process of Time, bring his Hair up to the Weight, that the Scripture records, which, according to the *Gold Shekel* (that was but half as much as the *Silver*) came to no more (as the learned *Bochart* endeavours to prove) than three Pound and two Ounces.

BUT since the Scripture says nothing of any such Additions, as Ointments, or Gold-dust, to enhance the Weight of the Hair; others, who think *this* too much for a Man, that polled his Hair once every Year, if not oftner, have observ'd from the Words, which we render at every Year's

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

(c) 2 Sam. xiv. 26.

(d) Gen. xxiii. 16.

(e) Jewish Antiq. lib. viii. c. 12.



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

*Year's End*, that, in the *Original*, they imply no particular Designation of Time; and thence infer, that *Absalom* did not weigh his Hair so often as once every Year, but at this particular Time only, when he return'd to *Jerusalem*. "He, in his Exile, *say they*, which lasted about three Years, pretending great Sorrow for his Sin, seems to have taken upon him the Vow of a *Nazarite*, until his Return; one Part of which was, that he should not suffer his Hair to be cut for such a determinate Time: But, upon his Re-call home, being now discharg'd from his Vow, he order'd his Hair to be cut all clean off, because it was grown very cumbersome to him; which, being of so long a Growth, amounted to the Weight, that the sacred History relates of it." But this Notion of *Absalom's Nazaritism* has no Foundation in Scripture, (f) except that lying Pretence to his Father, when, under the Cloak of Religion, he was minded to conceal his intended Rebellion; and therefore all the Superstructure built upon it, must necessarily fall.

OTHERS, perceiving that none of these Inventions would answer the Purpose, have endeavoured to solve the Difficulty by attending to the latter Words in the Text, *two hundred Shekels, after the King's Weight*: And, to this Purpose, (g) they lay it down as a *Principle*, that, during the Reigns of the Kings of *Judah*, there was no Variation in the *Hebrew Weights*, nor were there any, that were call'd the *King's*; that the Difference between the *King's* and the common Weight, did not commence, till after some Continuance of the *Babylonish* Captivity; that, towards the End of

this Captivity, whoever he was, that revis'd these Books of *Samuel*, made mention of such Weights as were not properly *Hebrew*, but such as (after *sixty* or *seventy* Years Captivity) the *Jews* only knew, and these were the *Babylonish*; and that therefore, when he comes to mention the Weight of *Absalom's* Hair, and tells us, that it was *two hundred Shekels*, he adds (by Way of Explanation) that it was *after the King's Weight*, i. e. after the Weight of the King of *Babylon*, whose *Shekel* was but the third Part of an *Hebrew Shekel*, (h) as the best Writers upon *Weights* and *Measures* are generally agreed. So that, according to this *Hypothesis*, *Absalom's* Hair, which weighed two hundred *Babylonish* Shekels, came but, in our Weight, to about thirty-three Ounces; a Quantity, which those, who deal in that Commodity, have not unfrequently met with upon several Women's Heads, and therefore what brings this long-contested Story, at least, within the Bounds of a fair *Probability*.

THUS have we attempted to solve most of the remarkable *Difficulties*, that either affect the Character of *David*, or other Parts of Scripture-Account, during this *Period* of its History: And may now begin to wave the *Testimony* of Heathen Authors, in Confirmation of what we may think strange and unaccountable in the sacred Records; because Facts of that Kind will not so frequently occur; and the *Jewish* Nation begins now, in the Reign of King *David*, to make so considerable a Figure, as to have their Affairs either mention'd, or alluded to, by the most remarkable Historians, both *Greek* and *Latin*.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

(f) 2 Sam. xiv. 7, &c.

(g) Vide *Gabriel's* Commentary in Locum.

(h) Ibid.



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

## DISSERTATION IV.

*Of the sacred Chronology, and profane History, during this Period.*

Difficulties in  
the Chronology  
clear'd.

**B**EFORE we enter upon the foreign History of this Period, it may not be improper to take Notice of some *chronological* Difficulties, that are to be found in the Scripture-Account of it. The Space of Time, from the Departure of the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, to the Laying the Foundation of the Temple at *Jerusalem*, is so exactly stated, that it will admit of no Dispute: For (a) *it came to pass, says the Text, in the four hundred and fourscore Year, after the Children of Israel were come up out of the Land of Egypt, in the Month Zif, which is the second Month; that Solomon began to build the House of the Lord:* But then the Manner of computing this Number of Years has been various.

(b) THE Generality of the *Jews*, who make it 450 Years from the Death of *Joshua*, to the Time of *Samuel*, suppose the Difference, from the Departure out of *Egypt*, to the first Beginning of the Temple, to be 597 Years; but this Account is 127 more, than what we find in Scripture. (c) *Josephus* expressly tells us, that, *when Solomon begun that mighty Work, it was 592 Years from the Coming of the Israelites out of Egypt;* but then it is presum'd, that he (as well as the other *Jews*) reckons the Years of the Oppressors apart; whereas they ought to be included in the Years of the *Judges*, who deliver'd the People from that Bondage: For, 'tis but looking into the Scripture-Account, and we shall see, that, (d) before *Othniel*, *Israel* was oppress'd eight Years; before *Ehud*, eighteen; before *Deborah*, twenty; before *Gideon*, seven; before *Jephthah*, eighteen; and before *Sampson*, forty; now, adding all these together, we shall find,

that they amounted to 111 Years; which, if joined to the Years of the *Judges*, will make the *particular* Years of this Period far exceed the *general*: But, by being included in the Time, assigned for the Government of the *Judges*, they make that *particular* and *general* Account of the Years agree very rightly.

THERE is another Difference between this Account in the first Book of *Kings*, and what the Apostle affirms in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, viz. that (e) *after the Time, that Joshua divided the Land to them by Lot, God gave them Judges for about the Space of four hundred and fifty Years, until Samuel the Prophet:* But now, if there be 450 Years from the Division of the Land of *Canaan* (which happen'd in the seventh Year of *Joshua's* Government) to the Time of the Government, or even of the Death of *Samuel*, there must be many more than 480 Years, in the whole Interval, from the Departure out of *Egypt*, to the Building of the Temple.

To solve this Difficulty, some have imagin'd, that the Words *μετὰ ταῦτα, after that*, which are found in the twentieth Verse, should be plac'd at the Beginning of the *seventeenth*, and then the Sense will be, that, *from God's chusing our Fathers, to the Time of the Judges, were four hundred and fifty Years;* for, from *Isaac's* Birth, say they, to the Departure of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, are 405 Years; they wander'd in the Wilderness forty Years; and the Land was divided by Lot seven Years after that; so that all these, put together, make 452 Years, which the Apostle expresses by the round Sum of 450. But this apparently is not the Sense of

(a) 1 Kings vi. 1.  
viii. c. 2.

(b) Bedford's Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 1.  
(d) *Milton's* History of the Church, c. i. p. 4.

(c) Jewish Antiq. lib.  
2.  
(e) Acts xiii. 20.



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

of the Apostle, who, in his Discourse to the People, goes on *gradually and methodically* thus. *God chose our Fathers; he brought them out of Egypt; he led them in the Wilderness forty Years; he divided the Land; and then he gave them Judges, &c.* (f) Others therefore have fallen into a different Way of Computation, by making the Years of the Judges and Oppressors distinct; for, *the Years of the Judges*, say they, *until Samuel's Time*, are 339; *the Years of the Tyrants* are 111; which, put together, make exactly 450: And this Kind of Reckoning the Apostle might mention, (though he did not entirely approve of it) and therefore we find him introducing it with an *as*, i. e. *after a Manner*, or as some will have it, who compute the Years of the Oppressors, as distinct from the Years of the Judges, though, in Reality, they ought to be included in one another.

THERE is still a farther Difficulty, which arises from comparing the Scripture-Chronology, with the Genealogies in the Book of *Ruth*. From the Entrance into the Land of *Canaan*, to the Building of the Temple, were 440 Years: Now, if out of this, we subtract for *David's* Life seventy Years, and for that Part of *Solomon's* Reign, which was before the Foundation of the Temple, four Years, the Remainder will be 366; and yet, for these three hundred and sixty-six Years, we have four Generations only, (for *Salmon* begat *Boaz* of *Rahab*; *Boaz* begat *Obed* of *Ruth*; *Obed* begat *Jesse*; and *Jesse* begat *David*) which, at a Time, (g) when the Age of Man was reduced to the Compass of seventy or eighty Years, is a Thing almost impossible. But, as it is not certain, that the Lives of all Men were shorten'd at the Time, when the *Israelites* murmur'd in the Wilderness, so far as the Reason for cutting them off so soon (even to pre-

vent their entering into the Land of *Pro-mise*) was peculiar to that Generation, and might not affect others; so the Lives of others might be extended much longer, until the Days of *David*, and especially in that Family, which God had honour'd so highly, as to appoint, that in it his blessed Son should be born.

(b) ACCORDING to this Account, we may suppose that *Salmon* might be about twenty Years old, when he enter'd into *Canaan*, and *Rahab*, whom he married, to be about the same Age; and that *Rahab* might bear *Boaz* in the sixty-second Year of her Age, which, in those Days, was no extraordinary Thing: And then, it is but supposing farther, that *Boaz* was an hundred and two Years old before he begat *Obed*; *Obed* an hundred and eleven before he begat *Jesse*; and *Jesse* of the same Age before he begat *David*; and the whole Difficulty is remov'd: Only it may be thought a little strange, that Men above an hundred Years old, should be capable of begetting Children, until it be consider'd, that *Moses* and *Aaron*, and *Joshua* and *Caleb*, were all vigorous Men at this Age; that, long after this, *Jeboia*, the High-Priest, was an hundred and thirty Years old when he died; and that, almost in our own Remembrance, our Countryman, *Thomas Parr*, liv'd to an hundred and fifty-two, and had a Son when he was an hundred and five Years old.

THIS may suffice for settling the Chronology; and now to proceed to the History of this Period. Our last Connection of the sacred and profane History, we concluded with the Life and Adventures of *Sesoftris*, who reign'd in *Egypt*, and made a very distinguish'd Figure in several Parts of the World, while the *Israelites* were sojourning in the Wilderness; but, from the Time that they enter'd in *Canaan*, \* they seem to have had no Intercourse with

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

The profane  
History of this  
Period.

9 O

the

(f) Vide *Grotius* and *Usher*. (g) *Psal.* xc. 10. and *Millar's Church History*, Chap. i. Period 4.

(b) *Belford's Scripture Chronology*, lib. v. c. 1.

\* We have formerly taken Notice (lib. iii. cap. 5. in the Notes) of the *Series of Egyptian Kings*, written by *Eratosthenes*, and preserv'd by *Synellus*; and here to proceed with that Catalogue. In the Year of the World 2523, reign'd in *Egypt*, *Echephin Carus*, one Year. In the Year 2524, began *Niboris*, and reign'd six Years. In the Year



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
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1055, &c.

the *Egyptians*, nor do their several Histories at all interfere.

ALL History, indeed, in this Period of Time, is so defac'd and corrupted with *Fables*, that it is a hard Matter to discern any Lincaments of Truth in it; and yet it may not be amiss to take Notice of some of its remarkable Events.

Of Deucalion.

ABOUT the thirty-ninth Year of *Eubud's* Government in *Israel*, (in the Time of *Deucalion*, Son of *Prometheus*) there happen'd such a Deluge in *Theffaly*, as gave (i) the Poets an Occasion to say, that all Mankind was therein destroy'd, and that *Deucalion*, and *Pyrrha* his Wife, repopled the World by throwing Stones behind them, which were instantly chang'd into Men and Women.

Plac'ton.

MUCH about this Time liv'd *Phaëton*, a Prince of the *Ligurians*, and a great Astrologer, that applied himself chiefly to the Study of the Course of the Sun; and because, in his Days, the Country of *Italy*, near the River *Po*, was so incommoded with extraordinary Heats, that the Earth became dry, and barren for several Years, (k) it hence became a renowned Fable among the Poets, that, by his Misguidance of the Horses of the Sun, (who is said to have been his Father) he set the Earth on Fire.

Ganymede.

ABOUT the fourteenth Year of *Tolab's* judging *Israel*, *Ganymede*, the Son of *Tros*, King of *Phrygia*, being belov'd by *Jupiter* (as the Poets fable) was by him carried up to Heaven in the Shape of an *Eagle*, and, much against *Juno's* Will, made Cup-bearer to the Gods.

Perseus.

ABOUT the sixth Year of *Jair's* Government, *Perseus* appear'd in the World, and of him the fabulous Writers have ma-

ny strange Stories; as, that he was begot by *Jupiter* on *Danaë*, in a golden Shower; that when he came to be of Age, he conquer'd the *Gorgons*, with their Queen *Medusa*, whose Hair was interwoven with Snakes; that he subdu'd the Inhabitants of Mount *Atlas*, and first deliver'd *Andromeda*, by killing the *Sea-monster* sent to devour her, and then married her; that afterwards, he fought against the Kings of *Mauritania*, and *Æthiopia*, and, returning to *Greece*, overcame his Uncle *Prætus*, and *Polydectes*, King of the Island *Seriphus*.

Few Things are more famous in the Songs of the Poets, than the Expedition of those valiant *Greeks*, that accompanied *Jason* to *Colchos*; and the Foundation of the Story is conceiv'd to be this: — That the *Argonauts* sail'd to some Part of *Scythia*, to carry off a Share of the Riches of that Country, where the Inhabitants gain'd a great deal of Gold out of the Rivers, that ran from Mount *Caucasus*, by using Sheep-skins with the Wool on, in order to take up that precious Metal, from whence it was call'd the Golden-fleece. But the Poets, out of their fruitful Brains, have made large Additions to the Story; viz. that *Jason* fell in Love with *Hyppisyle* at *Lemnos*; and that, at *Colchos*, he married *Medea*, the King's Daughter, who, being a famous Witch, taught him how to kill the Dragon, that kept the rich Fleece; how to conquer the Bulls, that vomited Fire; and how to sow the Serpents Teeth, out of which there arose an Army of Men; with many more Fictions of the like Nature.

BUT, of all the Occurrences in this Period, that which has been most celebrated

2530, began *Alytiens*, and reign'd twenty Years. In the Year 2552, began *Thyosmarts* (the same that *Herodotus* calls *Alyti*, or *Alyti*) and reign'd twelve Years. In the Year 2564, began *Thyrillus*, and reign'd eight Years. In the Year 2572, began *Semiphucars*, and reign'd eighteen Years. In the Year 2590, began *Chuter Taurus*, and reign'd seven Years. In the Year 2597, began *Cheras Philosophus*, and reign'd twelve Years. In the Year 2609, began *Ghomo Ephtha*, and reign'd eleven Years. In the Year 2620, began *Anchurins Ochus*, and reign'd sixty Years. In the Year 2680, began *Pentecathyrus*, and reign'd sixteen Years. In the Year 2696, began *Stamens*, and reign'd twenty-three Years. In the Year 2719, began *Sistofichemes*, and reign'd fifty-five Years. In the Year 2774, began *Maris*, and reign'd forty three Years. In the Year 2817, began *Siphons Hermes*. — In the Year 2836, began *Phruon*, or *Nilus*. — In the Year 2843, began *Amurbaum*, and reign'd sixty-three Years, or to the Year of the World 2906. Vide *Milla's* Church History, Chap. i. Period 4.

(i) *Ovid's* Metamorphosis, lib. i. fab. 7.

(k) *Ibid.* lib. ii. fab. 1.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

The Argo;  
nauts.



A. M. 2949, *Æc.*  
Ant. Christ. 1055, *Æc.*  
brated by the Poets, is the Siege of *Troy*;  
and the probable Occasion of it is suppos'd  
to be this:

And the Siege  
of *Troy*.

NOT long before this remarkable Event happen'd, the Seas were very much infested with Pirates, who landing on the Shores, seiz'd upon all the Women and Cattle they could meet with; and so carrying them off, either sold them in some distant Country, or kept them for their own Use. Hereupon *Tyndareus*, the Father of *Helena*, considering the Beauty of his Daughter, caus'd all her Lovers (who were some of the principal Men of *Greece*) to bind themselves by a solemn Oath, that, if at any Time she should be taken from her Husband, they would join all their Forces together to recover her: And so, being left to chuse whom she would have for her Husband, she made Choice of *Menelaus*, King of *Mycenæ*, and Brother to *Agamemnon*. *Paris*, one of the youngest Sons of *Priamus*, King of *Troy*, upon the Report of her Beauty, came into *Greece* to see her, and was kindly entertain'd by *Menelaus*; but he soon took an Opportunity to debauch his Wife, and, having robb'd the Husband of a great deal of Treasure, found Means to make his Escape both with her and it.

*MENELAUS* (as soon as his Wife was gone) complain'd of the Injury, that had been done him, to all the *Grecian* Princes, and requir'd the Performance of their Oath; which they readily consented to, and made his Brother *Agamemnon* General of the Forces, that were to be employ'd in this Expedition. The *Greeks* however being unwilling to enter into a War, if Matters could be accommodated by a Treaty, sent *Ulysses*, and some others, as Embassadors to *Troy*, to demand *Helena*, and all the Things of Value that were taken with her. What Answer the *Trojans* made to this Demand, we are no where inform'd; but sure it is, that the Embassadors return'd back so very much offended with their ill Treatment, that,

in a short Time, they fitted out a vast Armament. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

BUT there was an unhappy Accident, which mightily retarded the Siege of the City, and that was a Difference, which fell out between *Agamemnon* and *Achilles*. *Agamemnon*, as General, had the Pre-emption of what Part of the Booty he pleas'd, and had then taken to himself a captive Woman, the Daughter of *Chryses*, the Priest of *Apollo*, as *Achilles*, and the other Commanding-Officers, had made Choice of others; but, being oblig'd to give up the Priest's Daughter, in Atone-ment for the Pestilence that was fallen upon the Army, he sent, and took *Achilles's* Captive from him, which so exasperated this gallant Warrior, that, to revenge himself effectually, he took up a Resolution, neither to fight himself, nor suffer any Forces under him to engage; and this gave the Enemy so great an Advantage, that *Hector*, at the Head of his Forces, broke through the *Grecian* Trenches one Day, and set fire to the Ships.

IN the Midst of this Extremity, *Patroclus*, the Bosom-Friend of *Achilles*, not being able to stand *neuter* any longer, begg'd of *Achilles*, to let him have the Use of his Armour, and the Command of his Troops, in order to repulse the *Trojans*; which he bravely attempted, but, in the Engagement, fell by the Hands of *Hector*, who took from him the Arms of *Achilles*, and carry'd them off.

THIS Conjunction *Agamemnon* made use of to be reconcil'd to *Achilles*; and, to this Purpose, sent him back his Captive-Maid, with many very valuable Presents, and made an Excuse for his former Behaviour, as well as he could. *Achilles*, in order to be reveng'd for the Loss of his Friend, laid aside all Resentment, and join'd the *Greeks* in the next Battle, wherein he vanquish'd the *Trojans*; and, singling out *Hector*, never left pursuing him, wherever he went, until he had kill'd him. \* With *Hector* fell the City, which

\* *Homer* indeed, gives us this Account of the taking of *Troy*, but *Virgil* has inform'd us, that it was done by a large *awakened Host*, in which were inclin'd several of the chief Commanders of the *Greeks*: that the rest, setting til



A. M.  
2949, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1055, &c.

The Grecians  
Return.

which was soon reduc'd to Ashes, and its Inhabitants forc'd to undergo a *military* Execution.

BUT, how severe soever the *Greeks* might be to their conquer'd Enemies, several Historians have observ'd, that, in their Return home, they suffer'd almost as much Misery, as they had brought upon the *Trojans*. For this is the Account which *Thucydides* gives of them. "By Reason of their long Absence, they found many Alterations, when they return'd, so that some of them were driven by their Neighbours from their antient Seats; many were expell'd their Countries by Faction; others slain, soon after their Arrival; and others depos'd from their Kingdoms, by such, as had stay'd at home." *Nestor* and *Pyrchus* got safe home indeed, but were slain by *Orestes*. *Idomeneus* and *Philoctetes*, upon their Return, were soon driven away to seek for new Habitations. *Agamemnon* was, upon his first Arrival, slain by his Wife, and her Adulterer, *Ægisthus*, who had usurp'd his Kingdom. *Menelaus*, having long wander'd upon the Sea, was forc'd into *Egypt*, before he could re-

turn to *Sparta*. *Ulysses*, after ten Years Peregrination, and the Loss of his whole Company, came home in a poor Condition, and had much Difficulty to recover the Mastership of his own House. *Ajax*, the Son of *Oileus*, was drown'd; *Teucer* fled into *Cyprus*; and *Diomedes* to King *Daunus*. Some of the *Locrians* were driven into *Africa*, others into *Italy*, others into *Sicily*, and settled themselves in such Numbers in these Parts, that *Greek* became the current Language of this Island, and most of the East Part of *Italy* obtain'd the Name of *Magna Græcia*.

THUS the wise Ruler of the World was pleas'd to make one wicked Nation the Instrument of punishing another: But, whatever they severally suffer'd, the succeeding Generations obtain'd this Advantage by it, — That the Dispersion of the *Greeks* occasion'd a fuller peopling of distant Countries, by an Accession of these new Inhabitants; and the *Taking of Troy* became, in some Years, the settled *Epocha*, whereby all, that were acquainted with the *Story* of it, might agree in their Account of Time.

From 2 Sam.  
i. to xix.

to the Island of *Tenedos*, left *Sinon* to persuade the *Trojans*, that this Horse was built upon a religious Account, and was necessary for them to take into the City; that, by his Craft and Instigation, they pull'd down Part of the Wall for that Purpose; and so the *Greeks*, returning on a sudden, and entering the Breach, open'd the Horse, and seiz'd on the Gates, and burnt the City. But another Author, who perhaps might know the Truth, as well as *Virgil*, gives us a different Account of this Matter; viz. that *Æneas*, *Antenor*, and *Polydamus*, having taken some Disgust at King *Priamus*, agreed with the *Grecians* to betray the City to them, upon Condition, that they might retire with their Men wherever they thought fit, provided they did not settle in *Phrygia*. To this Purpose it was concerted, that the *Grecians* should set sail the Day before to the Island *Tenedos*, as if they were quite gone, but return in the Dark of the Night, when the *Trojans* thought themselves secure, and so be let in at the *Scæan Gate*, over which there was a large Image of an Horse, which gave the first Rise and Occasion to all this Story.



A. M.  
2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

## CHAP. V.

*From the Death of Absalom, to the Building of the Temple.*

## The HISTORY.

David's Grief  
for the Loss of  
his Son Absa-  
lom.

AS soon as *David* was inform'd of his Son's Death, all the Joy of the Victory was turn'd into Sorrow. The King himself withdrew to a † private Apartment, where he vented his Grief in such a † mournful Exclamation, as this: (a) *O my Son Absalom, my Son, my Son Absalom, would God I had died for thee! O Absalom, my Son, my Son!* And as for the Army, instead of returning in

Triumph, they stole silently into the City, as if they had done amiss, and had *lost*, instead of *gaining* the Battle.

THIS *Joab* perceiving, and being sensible that such excessive Grief, at this Juncture of Affairs, would be of great Prejudice to the King, went boldly in to him, and \* expostulated the Matter with him in Terms that might perhaps be necessary on that Occasion, but did not so well

† The Place, to which *David* withdrew, in order to vent his Grief, was, (as *Josephus* tells us, lib. vii. c. 10.) *to the Top of one of the highest Towers in the City*; but the sacred History calls it *the Chamber over the Gate*, 2 Sam. xviii. 33. for the Gate was a spacious Place, and much of the same Form with the Forum among the Romans, not only the Market for all Commodities, but the Place, where all great Assemblies of the People were likewise held. There were several Buildings, where the chief *Magistrates* sat to administer Justice, *Ruth* iv. 1, 2. and where the other Affairs of the State were transacted; so that it is not improbable, that this *Chamber over the Gate*, where *David* went to weep, might be some *Withdrawing-Room* in the Place, where the *Privy-Council* was wont to meet. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† Nothing certainly can be more moving and *pathetick*, than the Words which *David* utters upon this sad Occasion; but whether it was *David's* deliberate Wish, that he had died in *Absalom's* Stead, or only the Effect of his excessive Love and Grief for him, is not so easy a Matter to determine. *St Austin* seems to be on the affirmative Side, and gives this Reason for it: — That *Absalom* died impenitent, but might have liv'd to become a better Man; whereas, if *David* had died, he had Reason to hope well of his Salvation: But this Supposition, (as I take it) is not so well founded, since there is much more Probability, that if *Absalom* had surviv'd his Father, he would have grown more profligate than ever; triumph'd in his good Success; insulted and persecuted all his Father's Friends; and prov'd a wicked and abominable Tyrant. But whether *David's* Wish was deliberate or no, 'tis certain, that his Grief might be increas'd from this Reflection, that himself, by his own Sin in the Case of *Uriah*, had been the unhappy Instrument and Occasion of his Son's Death; tho' some learned Men have observ'd, that the *Oriental* People were accusom'd to express their Passions with more Vehemence, than we, in these Parts of the World, are wont to do, and that the Repetition of the same Word, (*My Son Absalom, O Absalom, my Son, my Son*) is a Style proper for mournful Lamentations.

———— Daphninqe tuum tollemus ad Astra,

Daphnin ad Astra feremus, amavit nos quoque Daphnis.

VIRG. Eccl. v.

Ἀιδῶ τὸν Ἀδωνιν, ἀπώλετο καλὸς Ἀδωνις

ᾠλετο καλὸς Ἀδωνις.

Bion. Id. 1.

*Patrick's and Calmet's Commentaries.*

(a) 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

\* *Josephus* concludes the Speech, which he supposes *Joab* to have made to *David* upon this Occasion, in Words to this Effect: — “ Pray, Sir, does not your Conscience, as well as your Honour reprove you for this intemperate  
“ Tenderness, for the Memory of so implacable an Enemy? He was your Son, 'tis true, but a most ungracious one;  
“ and you cannot be just to God's Providence, without acknowledging the Blessing of his being taken away. Let  
“ me intreat you therefore to shew yourself cheerful to your People, and let them know, that it is to their Loyalty  
“ and Bravery that you are indebted for the Honour of the Day; for if you go on, as you have begun, your King-  
“ dom, and your Army will most infallibly be put into other Hands, and you will then find something else to cry  
“ for.” *Jewish Antiq.* lib. vii. c. 10.



A. M.  
2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1623, &c.

well become a Subject's Mouth. However, they had this good Effect upon the King, that they rous'd him from his Melancholy, and made him appear in Publick, to the great Satisfaction of all his loyal Subjects; but, as he thought himself very insolently us'd by *Joab* upon several Occasions, from that Time he made it his Resolution to take the first Opportunity of † dismissing him from being his General.

His Return to  
Jerusalem,  
and by whom  
he was met,  
and conducted  
home.

THOSE of his Subjects, who had appear'd in Arms against him, being now made sensible of the Folly of their Rebellion, became the forwardest for his Restoration; but (what griev'd him much) his own Tribe, the Tribe of *Judah*, seem'd a little indifferent as to the Matter, which made him send to *Zadok* and *Abiathar*, the chief Priests, not only to remind them of their own Duty, but to authorize them likewise to treat with *Amasa* (who, tho' he had commanded *Abshalom*'s Army, was still a Man of great Authority in the Tribe) to offer him his Pardon, and, in Case he would come fully into his Interest, to promise him the *Generalship* in the Room of *Joab*.

THUS, all Things conspiring to his happy Restoration, the King left *Mahanaim*, and set forward on his Journey to *Jerusalem*, when the Chiefs of the Tribe of *Judah* came to meet, and conduct him over the *Jordan*. Old *Barzillai*, who had been very kind to the King in his Exile, and supply'd him with Provisions while he continu'd at *Mahanaim*, hearing that he was upon his Return, came to take his Leave of him, and see him safe over the

River; and when the King, in Gratitude for his Kindness, gave him an Invitation to go with him to *Jerusalem*, the good old Man modestly excus'd himself, upon the Account of his Age, as having now lost the Relish of the Pleasures of a Court, and desir'd rather to retire to his own Estate, where he might spend the Remainder of his Days in Quiet: But, as he had a Son, whose Age was more proper to attend him, if his Majesty would be pleas'd to confer any Favour on him, the Obligation would be the same; † which *David* promis'd to do, and so, with much mutual Blessings and Salutations, they parted.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

AMONG the many others who came to meet *David* upon this Occasion, *Shimei* the *Benjamite*, who, not long before, had loaded him with Curses and Imprecations, came, † with a thousand Men of his Tribe, to beg Pardon for his Fault; and, when *Abishai* would have persuaded the King to have him kill'd, he resented the Motion, as an Indignity put upon himself: And, being unwilling to eclipse the publick Joy with the Blood of any one, gave him his Royal Word and Oath, that he should live.

ANOTHER remarkable Person, that came to wait upon *David* at this Time, was the perfidious *Ziba*, with his fifteen Sons and twenty Servants. He had again impos'd upon his Master, and, when he order'd him to make ready his Ass, that he, among others, might go and meet the King, slid away himself to make his Court first; so that *Mephibosheth*, being lame, was forc'd to stay at *Jerusalem*, (where

† For he had sufficient Reason to think of depressing a Man, who was grown so insufferably insolent and imperious. He had slain *Abner* most perfidiously in cool Blood; had kill'd *Abshalom* against the King's express Command; in his late bold Reproof had insulted over his Sorrow, and (if we may believe *Josephus*) threaten'd to depose him, and give his Kingdom to another. To such a Height of Arrogance will Ministers sometimes arrive, when they find that their Service is become necessary to their Prince! *Patrick's Commentary*.

† What *David* did for *Chimham* is uncertain; but, as he had a Patrimony in *Bethlehem*, which was the Place of his Nativity, it is not improbable, that he gave a great Part of it to *Chimham*, and his Heirs for ever; and that this was afterwards call'd the Habitation of *Chimham*, in the Days of *Jeremiah*, Jer. xli. 17. *Bedford's Scripture Chronology*, lib. v. c. 4.

† The Reason why *Shimei* came with so large a Retinue, was, to let *David* see that he was a Man of some considerable Rank, and capable of doing him great Service among the People, which might be some Inducement to the King to grant him his Pardon; or, very likely, he was one of the Captains of a Thousand in his own Tribe, and might carry them all along with him, to make the stronger Intercession for his Pardon. *Poole's Annotations*.



A. M.  
2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

(where he had all along \* mourn'd for the King's Absence) until the King arriv'd: But, when he was admitted into his Presence, and the King seem'd to be angry with him for not having accompany'd him in his Exile, he charg'd this *seeming* Neglect upon the Perfidy of his Servant, and \* set his Case in so fair a Light, that the King revok'd the hasty Grant he had made in Favour of *Ziba*, and put his Estate upon the same Foot of Possession that it was before.

Sheba's Rebel-  
lion, and upon  
what Occa-  
sion.

WHEN *David* was pass'd the *Jordan*, he was willing to make all possible Haste to *Jerusalem*; and, as the Tribe of *Judah* was first that came to conduct him home, he (very probably to gratify them) march'd on without waiting for the great Men of *Israel*, who, in all Parts of the Kingdom, were making ready to join him. This occasion'd some hot Disputes between the Princes of *Israel* and those of *Judah*: And, as the King was loth to displease either Party, and therefore did not care to intermeddle in the Controversy, several of the Tribes of *Israel* took an outward *Umbrage* at this, which occasion'd a fresh *Insurrection*. *Sheba*, a *Benjamite*, and not unlikely one of *Saul's* Family, made

publick *Proclamation*, by the Sound of *Trumpet*, that "since the Tribe of *Judah* <sup>From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.</sup> had engross'd *David* to themselves, they might e'en take him; and, since all the other Tribes he had visibly deserted, their wisest Way would be to stand to their Arms, and, in like Manner, desert him:" Whereupon a great many of the other Tribes follow'd *Sheba*, but the Men of *Judah* persisted in their Loyalty, and conducted the King to *Jerusalem*. As soon as he arriv'd in the City, the first Thing he did, was to declare *Amasa* his *General*, and to order him to get together a sufficient Body of Forces, as fast as he could, to pursue after *Sheba*. † *Amasa* however, found more Difficulty in executing this Order, than was expected; which when *David* understood, he sent *Abishai* with his Guards (for he was resolv'd not to employ his Brother *Joab* any more) in Quest of *Sheba*, until *Amasa*, with the rest of the Army, could join him. Exasperated at this, *Joab*, without any Order, went along with his Brother; and when *Amasa* came up with them, (which was at *Gibeon*) and was going to take upon him the Command of the whole Army, he advanc'd, with all seeming *Friendliness*,

\* The Words in the Text are, that he had neither dressed his Feet, nor trimmed his Beard, nor washed his Clothes, from the Day that the King departed, 2 Sam. xix. 24. These were some of the Instances, wherein the *Jews* were wont to express their Mourning; and they are here mention'd by the Historian, as Evidences of the Falshood of *Ziba's* Information against his Master, since no one, who neglected himself to this Degree, could be suppos'd ambitious of a Crown. Not dressing his Feet, may signify either not cutting his Toe-Nails, or his not washing his Feet, which the *Jews* were accusom'd very frequently to do, because of the bad Smell which was natural to them, as well as the *Arabians*, and some other Nations; and therefore his Omission of this could not but make him offensive to himself. Not trimming his Beard was letting its Hair grow negligently, and without any Order. For the Manner of the *Jews* was, to cut the Hair from the Lip upwards, and what grew likewise on the Cheek, but what was on the Chin, and so backwards to the Ear, that they suffer'd to grow; and not washing his Clothes must denote his putting on no clean Linnen, but wearing the same Shirt all the while. *Calmet's* and *Patrick's* Commentaries.

\* *Josephus* brings in *Mephibosheth* pleading his Excuse to *David* for not attending him, and expressing a grateful Sense of his Favours, in such like Words as these: — "Nor has he only disappointed me in the Exercise of my Duty, but has been doing me spiteful Offices to your Majesty likewise: But you, Sir, are so just, and so great a Lover of God and Truth, that I am sure your Generosity and Wisdom will never entertain a Calumny to my Prejudice. Our Family has had the Experience of your Piety, Modesty, and Goodness to a Degree never to be forgotten, in passing over, and pardoning the innumerable Hazards and Persecutions, that you were expos'd to, in the Days, and by the Contrivance of my Grandfather, when all our Lives were forfeited, in your Power, and at your Mercy. But then, after all this gracious Tenderness, your superadding the Honour of taking me to your Table, (a Person so obnoxious in Regard of my Relations) as a Friend, and as a Guest, nothing could be either greater, or more obliging than this." *Jewish Antiq.* lib. vii. c. 7.

† The People, having been harass'd in the late *Civil War*, were not perhaps so forward to engage in another. Some of them might not like to serve under a Man, who had lately headed a rebellious Army against the King, and others might have conceiv'd so high an Opinion of *Joab*, as not easily to be brought to serve under any other *General*. Any of these Things might very well retard *Amasa's* Recruits, and yet he might be loth to make such a Report to the King, for fear that it might diminish his Authority, and make him appear not so well qualify'd for the Office, wherein he had plac'd him. *Patrick's* Commentary.



A. M.  
2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.  
Joab slays A-  
masa basely,  
and makes  
himself Gene-  
ral, and sup-  
presses Sheba's  
Rebellion.

*Friendliness*, to salute him, but, when he came within Reach, he \* took him by the Beard, and stabb'd him to the Heart; and so, leaving him to wallow in his Blood, proclaim'd himself *General in Chief*, and, taking the Army with him, pursu'd after *Sheba*, † leaving Orders for the Forces, that were coming up, to follow after.

*S H E B A* had gone about all the Tribes of *Israel* to see if he could prevail with them to take up Arms against *David*; but finding very few, that, upon second Thoughts, were willing to engage in his Measures, he was forc'd at last, with the few Forces he had got together, to shut himself up in *Abel*, a fortify'd Town in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, in the Northern Part of *Judea*: But *Joab* was soon at his Heels, and having besieg'd the Town, and batter'd the Walls,

was making Preparation for an *Affault*, when † a Woman of great Prudence call'd to the *Besiegers* from off the Walls, and desir'd to speak with their *General*. When *Joab* was come within hearing, the Woman address'd Herself to him in a very handsome Manner, and told him, “ That, † by a long Prescrip-  
“ tion of Time, it had always been a  
“ Custom, founded (b) on the Law of  
“ God, whenever the *Hebrews* came before  
“ any City, to offer Peace in the first  
“ Place, even though the Inhabitants were  
“ of another Nation; much more then  
“ ought this to have been done to a Peo-  
“ ple, that were all of the same Blood,  
“ and the greatest Part of them loyal Sub-  
“ jects to the King.” To which *Joab* replied, “ That he had no ill Design against  
“ the People of the City, only as they  
“ harbour'd a *Rebel* and a *Traitor*, whom  
“ he

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

\* It was an ancient Custom among the *Grecians*, to take the Person, to whom they had any Address to make, by the Chin, or Beard, *antiquis Græciæ in supplicando mentum attingere mos erat*, says *Pliny*, lib. xi. c. 45. and even to this Day, the *Turks*, in their Salutations, do very frequently take one another by the Beard, (Vide *Thevenot's Travels*, c. 22.) The *Arabians* have a great Regard to the Beard: The Wives kiss their Husbands, and the Children their Father's Beards, when they come to salute them; and, when two Friends meet together, their Custom is, in the Course of their Compliments, to interchange Kisses in this Manner, (Vide *Darvieux's Coustumes des Arabes*, c. 7.) as the like Custom is still preserv'd among the *Eastern People*, the *Indians*, who take one another by the Chin, when they would give an hearty Salute, and say *Bobba*; i. e. *Father*, or *Brother*, as the Author of the Voyage to the *East-Indies* relates. Vide *Peter de Valles's Travels*.

† So insolent was *Joab* become, upon the Presumption that *David* durst not punish him, that as he ventur'd upon this bloody Fact, so he imagin'd, that though the Sight of *Amasa's* dead Body might stop the March of those that came by it, yet, upon its being given out that he was again become their *General*, their Love for him was such, that they would not scruple to follow him. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† It seems not unlikely, that this Woman was a *Governess* in this City; for, tho' that Office was most commonly occupied by Men, yet there wants not Instances of Women, (as in the Case of *Deborah*, Judg. iv. 4. and Queen *Ataliab*, 2 Kings xi.) who have been employ'd in the Administration of civil Affairs. If she was invested with any such Authority, she was the properest Person to desire a *Parley* with the *General*; and Reason good she had to desire it, because she knew the present Temper and Fears of the *Citizens* and *Soldiers* both, viz. that considering the imminent Danger they were in, they were generally desirous of Peace, and restrain'd from it only by *Sheba's* Power and Authority. *Pool's Annotations*.

† In the Beginning of this Woman's Speech to *Joab*, there is something that seems both abrupt and obscure. They were wont to speak in old Time, saying, they should surely ask Counsel at *Abel*, and so they ended the Matter, 2 Sam. xx. 18. according to this Translation, the Sense of the Words is, ——— “ This City, which thou art about to  
“ destroy, is no mean and contemptible one, but so honourable and considerable for its Wisdom, and the wise People  
“ in it, that when any Difference did arise among any of the neighbouring Places, they us'd proverbially to say, *We*  
“ *will ask the Opinion and Advice of the Men of Abel about it, and we will stand to their Arbitration, and so all Parties*  
“ *were satisfied, and Disputes ended:*” So that her Words, according to this Sense, are an high Commendation of the City of *Abel*, for its being a Place (Time out of Mind) very eminent for the Wisdom and Prudence of its Inhabitants. But there is another Translation in the Margin of our Bibles, which seems to be more natural, and makes the Woman speak in this Manner: ——— “ When the People saw thee lay Siege to the City, they said, *Surely he will*  
“ *ask, if we will have Peace; for the Law prescribes, that he should offer Peace to Strangers, much more then to Israelitish*  
“ *Cities;* and if he would once do this, we should soon bring Things to an amicable Agreement; for we are peace-  
“ able People, and faithful to our Prince.” So that, according to this Interpretation, the Woman both modestly reprov'd *Joab* for the Neglect of his Duty, and artfully engag'd him in the Performance of it. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Pool's Annotations*.

(b) Deut. xx. 10.



A. M.  
2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

“ he demanded of them : ” Whereupon the Woman persuaded the Inhabitants to cut off *Sheba's* Head; and throw it over the Wall; which when they had done, *Joab* raised the Siege, and withdrew with his Army to *Jerusalem*; where his Services, upon this Occasion; were thought to be *such*, that the King found himself obliged to restore him to his Post of *Captain-General*.

A Famine for  
Saul's Slaugh-  
ter of the Gi-  
beonites re-  
mov'd.

NOT long after this, there happened a fore Famine in the Land, and the long Continuance of it (which was for three Years) made *David* suspect that it did not proceed from any common Cause; but was inflicted by the immediate Hand of God; and when he consulted the Divine Oracle to know the Occasion of it, he was given to understand, that *Saul's* Cruelty to the *Gibeonites*, in slaying so many, contrary to the Treaty then depending between him and them, was the Cause of it. Hereupon *David* sent to the *Gibeonites*, to know † what Satisfaction they desired; and when he was told, that they expected seven of *Saul's* Posterity to be delivered to them, he complied with their Demand, and sent two Sons of *Rizpah*, *Saul's* Concubine, and † five of *Merab*, his eldest Daughter, but spared *Mephibosheth*, the Son of *Jonathan*, for the Love, which he had for his Father when alive. These seven the *Gibeonites* took, and hung upon *Gibbets*; and there they intended them to

hang, † until God should send Rain upon the Earth, for the Want of this occasioned the Famine: But *Rizpah*, being informed of this, had a Tent made of Sackcloth (pitched near the Place) for her to live in; that so, by the Help of her Servants, she might \* keep watch Day and Night, to fright away the Birds and Beasts from doing any Hurt to the dead Bodies. It was not long however, before God sent plentiful Showers of Rain, so that *Rizpah* had the Liberty to take down the Bodies: And, when *David* was informed of this her pious Care, he was moved thereby to take up the Bones of *Saul*, and *Jonathan* his Son, (who, for five and thirty Years before, had been buried under a Tree at *Jabesh-Gilead*) and, together with these seven Sufferers of the same Family, gave them an honourable Interment in the Tomb of *Kish*, the Father of *Saul*, at *Zelah*, in the Country of *Benjamin*.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

*DAVID*, in the Beginning of his Reign, had so humbled the *Philistines*, that they were not able to bring any great Numbers into the Field, but still, as long as they had Men among them of a *gigantick* Stature, and such as were fit to be their *Champions*, they did not cease to disturb the Peace of *Israel*, insomuch, that *David*, in the latter End of his Reign, had four Engagements with them: In the first of which, himself had like to have been slain by one of these monstrous large Men,

† This may seem strange, unless we suppose, (as *Josephus* does) that, when *David* consulted God, he told him, not only for what Crime it was that he sent this Punishment, but that he should take such a Revenge for it, as the *Gibeonites* should desire: And there was this farther Reason for humouring the *Gibeonites* herein, because they had been modest under their Sufferings, and never made any Complaint to *David* of the Injuries, that had been done them. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† *Michal* is put in the Text indeed, 2 Sam. xxi. 8. but not by Mistake, as some will have it; for though *Michal* was not the Wife of *Adriel*, but *Mernab*; yet those Children which *Merab* had by *Adriel*, *Michal* brought up; and the *Jeios* observe, upon this Occasion, that whoever brings up a Pupil in his House, is in Scripture said to have begotten him. Nor is it in Scripture only, that this Form of Expression takes place, but in *Heathen* Authors likewise. For *Agamemnon* and *Menelaus* are called Sons of *Atrous*, because *Pylthes* (who was their Father) being dead, he took care to bring them up. *Howell's History*, in the Notes, and *Patrick's Commentary*.

† It was a positive Law to the *Israelites*, Deut. xxi. 22, 23. that, if any Man was hanged, he should be bury'd before Night; but the *Gibeonites*, being not of that Nation, thought themselves not oblig'd by that Law. They are remark'd indeed, to have been a Remnant of the *Amorites*, (2 Sam. xxi. 2.) and among them (as some have imagin'd) it was a barbarous Custom in those Days, (as it certainly prevailed in After-Ages) to hang up Men, in order to appease the Anger of the Gods in Time of Famine. *Patrick's* and *Calmer's Commentaries*.

\* It is an obvious Remark from hence, that *Crosses* and *Gibbets*, whereon *Malefactors* were executed, did not stand high from the Ground, since the dead Bodies of such were in Danger of being torn by *carnivorous* Creatures; and, what we may farther observe, in, that it was an ancient Custom for the *Relations* of such, as were thus executed, to watch their dead Bodies. Thus *Homer* (*Iliad* xxiii.) mentions *Venus*, as taking care of *Hector's* Body, and the Story of the *Ephesian* Matron every one can tell. *Calmer's Commentary*.



A. M.  
2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

Men, had not *Abishai* came timely in to his Aid, and killed the *Philistine*; upon which Occasion, it was unanimously agreed in the Army, that the King should never more go into the Battle, lest a † Life so precious should be lost.

IN the other three Engagements, nothing remarkable happened, but the Death of four of these *huge* Men, by the Hands of some of *David's* chief Officers; except we may mention here another valiant Act, † which might probably be done at this Time.

THE *Philistines* Army lay in the Valley of *Rephaim*, between *David's* Camp and *Bethlehem*, where they had likewise a Garrison: But notwithstanding this, upon *David's* intimating a Desire to have some of the Water of *Bethlehem*, three of his chief Captains broke through the Enemies Camp, and having drawn some Water out of the Well, brought it to *David*; but he, understanding at what Price it had been purchased, even at the Hazard of all

their Lives, would not drink it, but offered it to the Lord.

ABOUT two Years before *David's* Death, (whatever might be the Occasion of it) so it was, that || he was desirous to know the Number of his People, and accordingly, gave his chief Officers Orders to go through the whole Kingdom, and bring him an Account of all the People. *Joab* endeavoured to remonstrate against it, in a Manner more modest, than was customary with him; but the King's Orders were positive, and therefore *Joab*, with other Officers to assist him, beginning on the East Side of *Jordan*, came round by the North Parts of *Canaan*, and returned to *Jerusalem*, at the End of nine Months and twenty Days, with an *Estimate*, that in *Israel* there were eight hundred Thousand Men fit to bear Arms, and || five hundred Thousand in *Judah*; but of the Men, that belonged to the Tribes of *Levi* and *Benjamin*, there was no List given in.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

A Pestilence,  
for David's  
Numbering the  
People, re-  
mov'd.

## DAVID

† The Expression is very beautiful, and significant, in the Text. *Thou shalt no more go out with us to Battle, that thou quench not the Light of Israel*, 2 Sam. xxi. 17. For good Kings are in Scripture justly called the *Light* of the People, (1 Kings xi. 36. and *Psal.* cxxxii. 17.) because the Beauty and Glory, the Conduct and Direction, the Comfort, and Safety, and Welfare of a People, depend upon them, and are deriv'd from them. *Pool's* Annotations.

† It is commonly observ'd by the *Jewish* Commentators, that, though *David* express'd a Desire for some of the Water of *Bethlehem*, because it was the Place of his Nativity, and the Water not improbably very excellent in its Kind, yet he did not do this with any Intent, that any should venture their Lives to fetch him it. In this Action however, they have remark'd three wonderful Things, viz. That three Men could break through the whole Host of the *Philistines*; and when they had so done, durst stay to draw Water out of the Well; and then carry it away, with an high Hand, through the same Host to *David*: But they might have added a fourth Remark, viz. That they attempted this at the Gate of *Bethlehem*, where a Garrison of the *Philistines* kept a strong Guard. *Patrick's* Commentary.

|| The Words in the Text are ———— *And again the Anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah*, 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. But in the Original there is no Nominative Case at all. We find it however supply'd in 1 Chron. xxi. 1. where it is said, that *Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel*: But then, by the Word *Satan*, there is no Necessity why we should understand the Devil properly so called, because any evil Minister, or Counsellor, that advis'd *David* to number the People, will answer the Signification of the Word as well: And that there was some such Counsellor, who prompted *David* to this Action, seems to be imply'd in these Words of *Joab*: ———— *Now the Lord thy God add unto the People (how many soever they be) an hundredfold, and that the Eyes of my Lord the King may see it, but why doth my Lord the King delight in this Thing?* 2 Sam. xxiv. 3. Whereby it seems plain, that the Matter had been debated in the King's Council before, and that, though *Joab* was one who oppos'd it, *David* was more influenc'd by the Persuasion of some other. *Le Clerc's* Commentary.

|| If we compare this Account with what we meet with in 1 Chron. xxi. 5. we shall find a great Difference; for there the Men of *Israel* are said to be *three hundred thousand more*, than they are here, and, on the other Hand, the Men of *Judah* are said to be *thirty thousand less*: But, as for the former Difference, 'tis but supposing, that, in this Account recorded in *Samuel*, the standing *Legions* (which amounted in all to two hundred and eighty eight thousand, i. e. twenty-four thousand with their Officers, upon Guard every Month) are not here mention'd, tho' they be in *Chronicles*; and as to the latter Difference, 'tis but adding twenty-four thousand *legionary* Soldiers to the Tribe of *Judah*, and the Difficulty is remov'd: Tho' some are apt to think, that, in this Case, there is no need of this Supposition, because it is a common Thing in Scripture to mention a round Sum, either of Men, or Years, tho', upon a strict Computation, there may be some wanting. *Patrick's* Commentary.



A. M.  
2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

*DAVID* had no sooner received the Account, but his Heart misgave him, that he had done wrong; and, it was not long, before the Prophet *Gad* was sent to bring his Sin to Remembrance, and to offer him the Choice of three Punishments, || *Famine, Pestilence, or War,* which he liked best.

WHERE every Punishment was so destructive, it was hard to tell which to prefer; but *David* at last made Choice of the *Pestilence*, which accordingly was sent, and, in || a very short Time, destroyed no less than seventy Thousand Men. The Plague began in the extream Parts of the Kingdom, but every Moment made Advances nearer and nearer to *Jerusalem*; which when the King and Inhabitants of the City heard, they cloath'd themselves in Sackcloth, and, with all Humility, cry'd unto God for Mercy. A little before the Offering up of the *Evening-Sacrifice*, (or before the Time of *Evening-Prayer*) there appeared an Angel over *Jerusalem* brandishing a flaming Sword in his Hand, as if he were going to destroy it; whereupon *David* implored God's Mercy for the Peo-

ple what Vengeance soever might light upon him, who was chiefly guilty: But, as he was expecting some heavy Stroke, the Angel sent *Gad* to him with Orders to go immediately, and build an Altar in the *Threshing-Floor of Araunah the Jebusite*, which accordingly he did, and, having purchased the Place, and some Oxen for Sacrifice, (c) for || *fifty Shekels of Silver*, he offered *Burnt-offerings* and *Peace-offerings*, whereof the Lord declared his Acceptance by Fire from Heaven, and so the Plague ceased.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

It is not improbable, that God at this Time revealed to *David* the exact Frame, and Fashion of the Temple; that from the Acceptableness of his Sacrifices, he perceiv'd that this *Threshing-Floor* was the Place, which God had designed for the Situation of his Temple; that therefore he not only purchased that, but the whole Top of the Mount of *Moriab* likewise, at the Price of (d) *six hundred Shekels of Gold*, for the *Ground-plot* of this Temple; and that all the Remainder of his Time was employ'd, in providing whatever was necessary for the Purpose of building it; in settling the Number

His employing his Time towards the latter End of his Life.

|| There is another Difference in this Account, and what we meet with in the Book of *Chronicles*. There the Famine is said to be for *three Years* only, but here it is said to be for *seven*. The *Septuagint* indeed makes it no more than *three*; and for this Reason some have imagin'd, that the *seven* is an Error crept into the Text, especially considering that *three Years* of Famine, agree better with *three Days Pestilence*, and *three Months Flight before an Enemy*. But there is no Reason to suppose any Error in the Text; 'tis but saying, that in *Chronicles*, the Author speaks of those Years of Famine, which were to come for *David's Sin* only, but in *Samuel*, of those three Years of Famine likewise, which were sent for *Saul's Sin*, 2 Sam. xxi. Now within one Year, after the Famine, that was sent for *Saul's Sin*, was *David's Sin* in numbering the People; the intermediate Year then was either the *sabbatical* Year, wherein the People were not allow'd to sow nor reap, or a Year of such excessive Drought, that the Crop came to little or nothing. Upon either of these Accounts we may properly enough say, that there were four Years of Famine before, and *three* more being now added to them make up the *seven*, that are here mention'd. *Pool's Annotations*.

|| The Words in the Text are: — So the Lord sent a Pestilence upon Israel; from the Morning, even to the Time appointed. The Time appointed was the Space of *three Days*; and therefore some are of Opinion, that the Plague lasted so long; but then others urge, that this does not agree with what follows, viz. that God repented him of the Evil, and commanded the Angel, who smote the People, to stay his Hand. They therefore conclude, that as the Word *Moed* properly signifies an *Assembly*, the Time *Moed* must be, when the People met together at the Time of Evening Sacrifice, i. e. about the *ninth Hour* of the Day, and consequently, that the Plague continu'd from the Morning to this Time, which is about nine Hours, or the eighth Part of three Days; God in his Mercy having been pleas'd to mitigate the Rigour of his Judgment upon the sincere Repentance of his People. *Patrick's Commentary* and *Pool's Annotations*.

(c) 2 Sam. xxiv. 24.

|| There is again another Difference in the Account which we have in the *Chronicles*, and this in *Samuel*. In the *Chronicles* it is said, that *David* bought the *Threshing-Floor*, &c. for *six hundred Shekels of Gold*, but in *Samuel* it is said, for *fifty Shekels of Silver*. Now a Shekel of Gold being of twelve Times more Value, than a Shekel of Silver, it makes the Disparity very large; and therefore (to account for this) it is generally suppos'd, that in the whole *David* made two Purchases; first he bought the *Threshing-Floor* and Oxen, for which he gave *fifty Shekels of Silver*; but that afterwards all the Ground about it (out of which the Courts of the Temple were made) cost him *six hundred Shekels of Gold*. *Patrick's Commentary*.

(d) 1 Chron. xxi. 25.



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Number of the Officers, and the Manner of the daily Service of those, that were to attend it; next to this, in settling his *civil* Affairs, and appointing (e) *Judges*, Magistrates, and all inferior Officers, whose Business it was to punish *Offenders*, and to keep all others to their Duty; then, in settling his (f) *military* Matters, particularly the twelve *Captains*, for every Month, with their *Legions*, to attend on the King in their Turns; then (g) the *Princes* of the twelve *Tribes*, and afterwards (h) several other Officers.

BUT while he was contriving these Things in the best Manner; he seems to have been taken, either with a *dead Palsy*, or some other Distemper, which chilled his Blood, so that he could not be warm in his Bed. His *Physicians* therefore advis'd, that, to supply him with † a *natural* Heat, a Virgin should lie in the same Bed with him; for which Purpose *Abishag* of *Shunem*, in the Tribe of *Issachar*, was brought to him, and made *Concubinary* Wife, tho' he had never any carnal Knowledge of her.

*ADONIJAH*, who (next after *Absalom*) was *David's* eldest Son, taking the Advantage of his Father's Age and Infirmary, began to entertain Thoughts of

making himself King, presuming, that his Father either could not, or would not obstruct him. He was indeed a Prince of exquisite Beauty, admir'd by all, and so indulg'd by his Father, that he † never contradicted him in any Thing; but, as he had a great deal of *Absalom* in his *Complction*, he failed not to imitate him in his *Equipage*, Attendants, and splendid Manner of Life.

By some Means however, he had gain'd *Joab* the General of the Forces, and *Abiathar* the *High-Priest* over to his Party; and by their Advice it was, that he invited all the Kings Sons, (except *Solomon*) and all the great Men of *Judah*, except *Nathan* the Prophet, *Benaiah* Captain of the Guards, and the Officers of the Army (who, with *Zadok* the other High-Priest, were not for him) to a sumptuous Entertainment at *Enrogel*, where the Purpose of the Meeting was (as soon as the Company had well feasted) to proclaim him King in the Room of his Father. *Nathan*, who knew † God's Designation, *David's* Choice, and the People's Interest in the Matter, having got Intelligence of this, went and acquainted *Bathsheba* with it, and advis'd her by all Means to go and press the King † to declare *Solomon* his Successor,

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

(e) 1 Chron. xxvi. 29, to the End.

(f) Ibid. xxvii. 1, to 15.

(g) Ibid.

(h) Ibid.

xxix. 1, to 20.

† It is the Observation of *Galen*, in his fifth Book of *the Power of simple Medicines*, that nothing so effectually procures Heat and Health, as the Application of any Thing young to the Stomach: The Advice of *David's* Physicians therefore was not amiss; but it had been sinful Advice, and such as he could not have follow'd, had not this young Woman, whom he took to Bed to him, been his *Concubinary* Wife. In those Days such Wives were allowable: And that she serv'd him in this Capacity is very manifest from the Account we have of her in Scripture; for, whereas it is said, that *the King knew her not*, this certainly implies, that he might have had carnal Knowledge of her without Sin, or Scandal; whereas it is said, that *she lay in his Bosom*, this Phrase every where in Scripture denotes what was the sole Privilege of a Wife, or Concubine, *Gen. xvi. 5. Deut. xiii. 6.* Nor can we imagine, why *Adonijah's* desiring her in Marriage had been so heinous a Crime in *Solomon's* Account, had she not been the King's Wife, and he, by this Means, had design'd to revive his Pretensions to the Crown. *Pool's* Annotations.

† It is remark'd of *David*, that one of his great Faults, and what had led him into many Premunures, was his extraordinary Indulgence to his Children, of whom he was so fond, that he seems to have overlook'd their Errors, and not reprov'd them, though he was bound to do it by a plain Law, *Lev. xix. 17.* and could not but know, that the High-Priest *Eli* was severely punish'd for this Neglect. *Pool's* Annotations.

† In 2 Sam. vii. 12. God had promis'd *David* by *Nathan*, that he would set upon his Throne a Son, that should proceed from him, which plainly signify'd, that none of his Sons already born were to be the Person; and in 1 Chron. xii. 8, &c. he declar'd by the same Prophet, that, after his Father, *Solomon* should reign, and build him an House. This *Adonijah* could not but know; and therefore his setting himself against the Decree of Heaven made his Sin the greater. *Patrick's* Commentary.

† This Power of naming a Successor was first assum'd by *David*, and, for some Time afterwards (as appears by the Story of his Grandson *Rehoboam*) was continu'd in the *Jewish* State. It was a Privilege that, in After-Ages, was granted to several good Princes, but among the *Israelites* it did not prevail long, because the Constitution of other Nations (to which the *Israelites* affect'd to conform themselves) was different. *Pool's* Annotations and *Patrick's* Commentary.

His proclaim-  
ing Solomon  
his Successor.



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Successor, since Things were now come to that Extremity, that, without her doing this, all their Lives must certainly be in Danger. *Bathsheba* pursu'd her Instructions; went to the King, and, having acquainted him with *Adonijah's* Conspiracy, desir'd him to name her Son his Successor, according to the Oath, that he had formerly made to her. While she was thus talking with the King, *Nathan* came in, and confirm'd what she had said; so that *David* immediately declar'd *Solomon* his Successor, and thereupon commanded *Zadok* the Priest, *Nathan* the Prophet, and *Benaiah* the Captain of his Guards, with the other Officers and Ministers of State, to mount him † on the Mule, that he himself us'd to ride; and, having in this Manner † conducted him to *Gibon*, there to let *Zadok* and *Nathan* anoint him, and then, by Sound of Trumpet, to proclaim him King of *Israel*. All this was accordingly done, and the People of *Jerusalem*, by their loud Shouts and Acclamations of Joy, gave

Testimony of their Approbation of *David's* Choice.

BUT how thunder-struck was *Adonijah*, and his Company, when, being just upon the Point of proclaiming him King, they heard the Sound of the Trumpet, and the Shouts of the People attending *Solomon*! As soon as they were inform'd of the Occasion each Man thought proper to shift for himself; but, as for *Adonijah*, he \* fled to the Altar for Sanctuary, till, having obtain'd of *Solomon* a Promise of Life, upon Condition that he would never attempt any Thing for the future against his Government, he was conducted into the King's Presence, where he made his Obedience to *Solomon*, in Token of Thankfulness for his Preservation, and in Acknowledgment of his Superiority.

THIS Inauguration of *Solomon* however was a little too hasty and private; and therefore *David*, intending a more publick Coronation, order'd all the Princes of *Israel* and *Judah*, and all the Officers of his Court and Army, to attend him:

When

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

His Speech to  
the Princes,  
and People of  
*Israel*, con-  
cerning the  
Building of the  
Temple.

† All the rest of *David's* Sons were wont to ride upon Mules, when they went abroad, 2 Sam. xiii. 29. but *David* had a Mule peculiar to himself, and the mounting *Solomon* upon it was a sufficient Declaration in his Favour. For, as it was capital (according to *Maimonides*) to ride upon the King's Mule, or sit on his Throne, or handle his Sceptre without his Order; so, on the contrary, to have the Honour to ride upon the King's Horse, by his Appointment, was accounted the highest Dignity among the *Persians*, as appears by the Story of *Mordecai* in the Book of *Esther*. *Calmet's* Commentary.

† Some Commentators are of Opinion, that *Gibon* was the same with the Fountain of *Siloam*; but this is a gross Mistake, since *Gibon* was manifestly to the West, and *Siloam* to the East of *Jerusalem*. There is little or no Certainty likewise in the Notions of some Rabbins, who pretend that, in ancient Times, Kings were always anointed by the Side of a Fountain, by way of good Omen, or that the perpetual Running of the Stream might be an Emblem of the Perpetuity of their King's Reign. In the History of *Saul*, who was their first King, and of *David*, who was three Times anointed, we find no Mention made of any Spring or Fountain. As these Fountains however were Places of great Concourse, (for there were not many in *Jerusalem*) the chief Reason, we may imagine, why *David* order'd *Solomon* to be anointed at one of these, was, that the Thing might be done as publickly, and in the Presence of as many Spectators, as possible. *Patrick's* Commentary.

\* There is no Precept in the Law to make the Altar a privileg'd Place; but, in Conformity to the Customs of other Nations, the Jews seem to have done it. Other Nations had certainly this Custom, as appears from that Passage in *Virgil*:

Talibus orabat dictis, arasque tenebat.

*Æneid* vi.

And it seems not unlikely, that, as the People, when they came into the Land of *Canaan*, had Cities appointed by God, whereunto the Manslayer might flee; so, while they continu'd in the Wilderness, the Camp of the Levites might serve for the same Purpose. Nay, from the Words in *Exodus* xxi. 14. where God orders the wilful Murderer to be taken from his Altar, that he may die, it seems unquestionably true, that, even in the Land of *Canaan*, the Altar continu'd a Sanctuary for those who fled unto it; but then the Question is, to what Altar *Adonijah* fled; Whether to the brazen one, which *Moses* made, and which was now at *Gibeon*, or that which his Father had lately erected in the Threshing-Floor of *Araunah*? 'Tis expressly said, 1 Kings i. 50. that he caught hold of the Horns of the Altar; but we can hardly suppose, say some, that the Altar in the Threshing-Floor, which was run up in such Haste with Stones and Turf, was made in that Figure. But what should hinder us from supposing, that, as *David* had built a Place for the Reception of the Ark of the Covenant on Mount *Sion*, he had likewise built there an Altar, for the Oblation of the daily Sacrifices, in the exact Form of the original one, that was then at *Gibeon*, and that it was to this Altar, and neither of the others, that *Adonijah* betook himself for Refuge. *Le Clerc's*, *Patrick's*, and *Calmet's* Commentaries.



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When having recover'd a little from his late Indisposition, he stood up, and, \* in a solemn *Oration*, put them in Mind of God's Goodness to him, and of his Designation of *Solomon* to succeed in his Throne, and to build him a Temple. And therefore, since he had reserv'd that Honour for his Son, he earnestly recommended to him a strict Fidelity and Piety towards God, and a zealous Discharge of this important Trust. To this Purpose he gave him the *Plan*, which he had made for the Execution of this Undertaking, and an Account of the Treasures, which he had provided for the perfecting of this great Work. He gave him also a List of the *Priests* and *Levites*, and the *Courses*, in which they were to wait in the Temple: He gave him likewise the *Schemes*, and Regulations of the Officers of his Court, of the *civil* Officers, of the Treasurers, and of the Superintendants of the *Revenues*, belonging to the Crown; and, having made a large Oblation of Money out of his own *private* Estate for the Building of the Temple, by his Example

and Persuasion, he prevail'd with the *Princes*, and the People to contribute (according to their Abilities) to so good and pious a Work. And when he found himself successful herein, (for what they gave upon this Occasion amounted to an immense Sum) he concluded all with a solemn Thanksgiving to God, and a *Prayer*, that he would enable *Solomon* to perfect what he had thus design'd, and recommended.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

THE next Day there was a very great and solemn *Sacrifice*, and much Rejoicing among the People. *David*, upon this Occasion, had *Solomon* anointed a second Time in a more publick Manner; order'd that *Zadok* should be the High-Priest in the Room of *Abiathar*, who had publicly espous'd the Interest of *Adonijah*; and (to put an End to all Disputes after his Decease) had him for the future seated on a *royal* Throne, and made sole Regent of the Kingdom during his Life-Time.

NOT long after this, *David*, perceiving his End approaching, called for *Solomon*, \* and gave him his last Exhortation, which

And dying  
Charge to his  
Son Solomon.

\* The Speech which *Josephus* puts in *David's* Mouth upon this Occasion, is to this Purpose: ——— “ I am now to inform you, my Countrymen and Brethren, that I have had it a long Time in my Thoughts to erect a Temple to the Lord, and have treasur'd up a mighty Mass of Gold and Silver toward the Charge of the Undertaking; but it hath pleas'd God in his Providence, by the Mouth of his Prophet *Nathan*, to put a Stop to my Design, upon this Consideration, that he would not have the Foundation of his holy House laid by Hands, that have been dipp'd in Blood, which mine inevitably have been, (tho' in the Blood of your Enemies) in the Wars I have been forc'd to engage in, for the necessary Defence of your Liberties: But, at the same Time that he forbid me to do this, the Prophet inform'd me, that God had transmitted the Care of the whole Work to my Son and Successor. Our Father *Jacob* (as you all very well know) had twelve Sons, and yet *Judah* was chosen by common Consent to be Ruler of all the rest. You know likewise, that I myself (tho' there were then six Brothers of us) was advanc'd by God to the Government, and that none of the rest thought themselves injur'd: Wherefore I must now, in like Manner, require it of you, and of all your Sons, that you submit cheerfully and dutifully to my Son *Solomon*, and that ye do it without any Grumbling, or civil Dissension, because it is from God's immediate Command and Commission, that he derives his Authority. Put the Case now, that God should have set a Stranger over you, how great a Folly and Madness would it have been for you to murmur at it? But how thankful ought you to be, for the Choice of so near a Relation, when you yourselves are Partakers of the Honour, that is done to your Brother. There is nothing I so much long for, as to see God's gracious Promises take a speedy Effect, and the whole People put into a lasting Possession of the Blessings, they are to enjoy under the Reign of *Solomon*. And all this, my dear Son, (*says he, turning to Solomon*) will be made good, and every thing succeed to your Wish, so long as you govern according to Piety and Justice, with a Respect to your Duty both towards God and Man, upholding a Reverence to the Laws, and treading in the Steps of your Forefathers: But, whenever you pass these Bounds, there is nothing but Ruin and Misery to be expected.” *Jewish Antiq.* lib. vii. c. 11.

\* *Josephus* introduces *David*, as taking his last Leave of his Son *Solomon* in these Words: ——— “ And now, Son, I am going to my Fathers, and you, that I leave behind me, are in due Time to follow, which is no more than paying a common Debt to Nature. There is no returning from the Grave, and, when we are once gone, we have done with this World for ever. Wherefore, while I am yet among the Living, and before it be too late, pray let me remind you of the same Things once more. ——— Govern your Subjects according to Justice. Worship that God, from whom you have receiv'd your *Dignity*, as well as your *Being*, as you are bound to do. Observe his Precepts, and keep his Laws, as they have been handed down to you from *Abel*, and have a care that you never forsake them, either for Fear, Flattery, or any Passion, or Interest whatsoever; for either

“ wife



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which was, to be constant in his Duty to God, (i) *to walk in his Ways, and † keep his Statutes, and his Commandments, his Judgments, and his Testimonies, that he might prosper in all that he did*; and then descending to some particular Affairs relating to the State, he charg'd him to do Justice to *Joab*, for the many Murders he had been guilty of; to shew Kindness to the Sons of *Barzillai*, for the Support their Father had given him in his Distress; and tho' he himself had not put *Shimei* to death

for his past Offences, yet whenever he should prove guilty again, not to spare him. Having thus ended his Exhortation to his Son, in a short Time after he died, in the seventy-first Year of his Age; after he had reign'd forty Years in all, || *seven in Hebron, and three and thirty in Jerusalem*; and \* was buried in that Part of the City, which himself had taken from the *Jebusites*, and called after his own Name.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

WHEN

“ wife you can never hope for the Blessings of God's Favour and Providence: But if you behave yourself with  
“ Reverence and Submission towards God, as you ought to do, and as I wish you may do, your Kingdom will be  
“ establish'd to yourself, and the Succession of it continu'd to your Family from Generation to Generation.” *Jerwiff's*  
Antiq. lib. ii. c. 12.

(i) 1 Kings ii. 3, — 11.

† Under these four Words are comprehended all the Laws of *Moses*. *Statutes* were such *Constitutions*, as had their Foundation, not in Reason, but in the Will and Pleasure of God; such was the Prohibition of sowing Seeds of different Kinds together, &c. *Commandments* were moral Duties, that were founded in the Nature of Things, and carry'd their Reason along with them; as not to steal, not to murder, &c. *Judgments* were the Laws belonging to Civil Government, and the Dealings of one Man with another; such are all those Laws, that are recorded in the Twenty-first and following Chapters of *Exodus*; and *Testimonies* were such Laws, as preserv'd the Remembrance of some great Events, and testify'd to Men the Loving-Kindness of the Lord; such as the *Sabbath*, the *Passover*, and the rest of the *Feasts*. *Patrick's Commentary*.

|| In 2 Sam. v. 5. it is said, that he reign'd seven Years and six Months in *Hebron*, which, together with the three and thirty in *Jerusalem*, will make his Reign to be in all forty Years and a half. To solve this Difficulty, (as some of the *Jews* esteem it) they have devis'd a Conceit, that, to punish *David* for his Adultery with *Bathsheba*, God sent upon him a *Leprosy*, which continu'd for six Months, in all which Time he was look'd upon as dead, and not accounted to reign: But they never consider'd, that these Months were Part of his Reign in *Hebron*, before he committed that Adultery in *Jerusalem*. The true Account of the Matter therefore is, that it is very usual, in Scripture-Computation, to omit smaller Sums, and only reckon by a round Number; for which Reason these six Months, which were but Part of a Year, are not taken Notice of in the Account both of *Kings*, 1 Kings ii. 11. and *Chronicles*, 1 Chron. xxix. 26, 27. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Pool's Annotations*.

\* After this Account, which *Josephus* gives us of *David's* several Speeches before his Death, he informs us, —  
“ That he was bury'd at *Jerusalem* with a Solemnity of royal Pomp and Magnificence, that was glorious to the highest  
“ Degree, and that, over and above the Splendor of the Ceremony, his Son *Solomon* deposited in his Monument an  
“ inestimable Treasure, from which, when *Antiochus*, surnam'd the *Pious*, besieg'd *Jerusalem*, *Hircanus*, the High-  
“ Priest, took to the Sum of *three Thousand Talents*, and therewith brib'd them to raise the Siege; and that, many  
“ Years after this, *Herod*, surnam'd the *Great*, took another immense Sum from thence, which enabl'd him to re-  
“ build the Temple.” Among several Nations indeed it was customary to bury, along with Princes, and other great Men, various Things of Value, that they took Delight in while they liv'd. The *Egyptians* were us'd to this; and about their *Mummies* are frequently found very precious Ornaments. When *Alexander the Great* had *Cyrus's* Tomb open'd, there was found therein a Bed of Gold, a very rich Table, drinking Cups, and many fine Vestments; but, notwithstanding all this, several learned Men look upon this whole Account of *Josephus* as a mere Fable. For, to what Purpose, say they, did *Solomon* bury all this Treasure under Ground, when he had so much Occasion for it; when he was forc'd to borrow Money of the King of *Tyre*, and burthen his People with so many heavy Taxes to supply his excessive Expences? How came it, that the other Kings of *Judah*, who were frequently put to the Necessity of stripping the Temple of its precious Furniture to satisfy their greedy Enemies, never once adventur'd to lay hold on this Treasure? How came it to escape the Hands of the *Chaldeans*, and other Nations, that so often had the plundering of *Jerusalem*? Or why should *Hircanus* violate this *Depositem*, which his Predecessors esteem'd more sacred than the holy Vessels of the Lord? These are Questions, that cannot easily be resolv'd; and, (what is a farther Confirmation of this Story) in that very Book, from whence *Josephus* is suppos'd to have taken it, it is never once said, that *Hircanus* broke open *David's* Tomb. The Words of that *spurious* Author are, that *Hircanus*, while he was besieg'd by *Antiochus*, open'd a *Treasure-Chamber*, which belong'd to some of *David's* Defendants, and that, after he had taken a large Sum of Money out of it, he still left a great deal in it, and seal'd it up again: But this is quite a different Thing, and has no Manner of Relation to the Sepulchre of *David*. As to the real Sepulchre of *David*, 'tis certain, that it was always held in great Veneration among the *Jews*. It was in Being in *St Peter's* Time, for so he tells the People, *Acts* ii. 29. *Dio* (in *Adriani vita*) informs us, that Part of it was fallen down in the Emperor *Adrian's* Reign. *St Jerom* relates, that he himself us'd frequently to go and pray at it; and modern Travellers (as we took

Notice



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2981, &c.  
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1023, &c.

Solomon suc-  
ceeds his Fa-  
ther David,  
and cuts off  
his chief Ad-  
versaries.

WHEN *David* was dead, *Solomon* suc-  
ceeded to the Throne; and, to secure his  
Possession, took an Occasion, in a short  
Time, to rid himself of his Adversaries.  
*Adonijah*, in his Father's Life-time, made  
bold Pretensions, but was defeated, and  
pardon'd by *Solomon*, upon Condition that  
he would become a good Subject, and give  
him no farther Molestation; but by the  
Persuasion of *Joab*, and *Abiathar*, he  
was now put upon another bold Project,  
which was to desire *Abishag* (the late  
King's Concubine in his old Age) in Mar-  
riage, hoping thereby to strengthen his In-  
terest, and to be able to play an *After-game*  
for the Crown. To this Purpose he pre-  
vail'd with *Bathsheba*, the *Queen-Mother*,  
to speak to the King: But the King was  
so far from granting his Request, that he  
was shock'd at the Boldness of it, and,  
suspecting some treasonable Design at the

Bottom, sent immediately, and had him  
put to Death. In the next Place, he ban-  
ish'd *Abiathar*; and, having inhibited  
him from the Exercises of his *priestly Of-  
fice*, confin'd him to his *Country-House*,  
and put *Zadok* in his Place; and, when  
he heard that *Joab* was fled into the *Taber-  
nacle* for *Sanctuary*, upon his refusing to  
come out at his Command, † he order'd *Be-  
naiab* (whom he afterwards made *General*  
in his Room) to go in, and kill him there.  
But when *Shimei*, who deserv'd the like  
Fate for his gross Abuse of the late King,  
was brought before him, he only † confin'd  
him to *Jerusalem*, as a Prisoner at large,  
but with a strict Injunction not to move  
out of the Place upon Pain of Death.  
Upon this Condition he thankfully accepted  
of his Life, and, for some Time kept with-  
in the Bounds of his Confinement; but  
having some Slaves, who had run away,  
and

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

Notice before) describe some magnificent Monuments hew'd in a Rock, not far from *Jerusalem*, which are doubtless very *antient*, but they themselves do not agree, that they were the Sepulchres of the Kings of *Judah*. 'Tis some-  
what unaccountable however, that the Place of this Prince's Sepulchre, which both the *Chaldeans* and the *Romans*,  
when they took *Jerusalem*, thought proper to spare, should now be so entirely lost, that we cannot find the least  
Remains of it. But tho' Providence has so order'd it, that the Place of *David's* Sepulchre should not at present be  
known, yet there does not want an eternal Monument of his most excellent *Genius*. The Book of *Psalms*, which for  
the most Part was compos'd by him, does publish the Glory of its Author more than the most pompous *Elogies*, and  
the Author of *Ecclesiasticus* (Chap. xlviii. 2, &c.) has consecrated this *Epitaph* to his Memory, which is more durable  
than either *Marble* or *Brass*: ——— *As the Fat is taken away from the Peace-Offering, so was David chosen out of the  
People of Israel. He played with Lions as with Kids, and with Bears as with Lambs; he slew a Giant when he was  
young, and took away Reproach from the People; for he called upon the Most High Lord, and he gave Strength to his Right-  
Hand to slay this mighty Warrior, and to set up the Horn of his People. So the People honoured him with ten Thousands,  
and praised him in Blessings of the Lord; for he destroyed the Enemies on every Side, and brought to nought the Philistines,  
his Adversaries: ——— In all his Works he praised the holy One most high, and blessed the Lord with Words of Glory: ———  
He set Singers also before the Altar, that, by their Voices, they might make sweet Melody, and daily sing Praises in their  
Songs. He beautified their Feasts, and set their solemn Times in perfect Order: ——— The Lord took away his Sins, and  
exalted his Horn for ever; he gave him a Covenant of Kings, and a Throne of Glory in Israel. Calmet's Commentary,  
and his Dictionary, under the Word *David*.*

† It was formerly very customary among Princes, to employ their Officers, or greatest Confidants, in such like  
Executions. Among the *Romans*, the Soldiers were always the Persons, who carry'd to Prison, to Torture, or to  
Execution, such as were found guilty of any Offence; and this *Tertullian* makes an Argument to dissuade *Christians*  
from engaging in the Wars, lest thereby they should be oblig'd to imprison, punish, or execute Malefactors. In  
*Dan. ii. 24.* we read, that *Nebuchadnezzar* sent *Arioch*, who was chief Commander of his Troops, to destroy the *Wise-  
Men* of *Babylon*, because they could not interpret his Dream; and therefore we need less wonder, that we find  
*Solomon* employing *Benaiah*, the Captain of his Guard, on the like Office: But whether he did not first drag *Joab*  
from the Altar, before he slew him, for fear of polluting the holy Place with Blood, or whether *Solomon* did not  
rather think fit to have him kill'd even at the Altar, and let all Men see, that no Place, though never so sacred,  
should secure any Man from the Hand of Justice, Commentators have not agreed. *Calmet's* and *Patrick's* Com-  
mentaries.

† *Shimei*, as we read, was a very powerful Man. When he came to meet King *David*, and to beg Pardon for  
his Offence, he had a Thousand of his own Tribe to accompany him, 2 Sam. xix. 17. and therefore *Solomon* might  
think proper to confine him to the City of *Jerusalem*, that, being remov'd from the Place, where his Family and  
Interest lay, to one where he was but a Stranger, and sufficiently odious for his former *ill Treatment* of the late King,  
he might be incapable of raising any Tumults, or Seditions; and that, being in this *publick Theatre*, all his Words and  
Actions might be narrowly observ'd, which, considering his busy and wicked Temper, might give *Solomon* a fair  
Advantage against him; and (as the Manner of some is) the very Prohibition itself might probably inflame his Desire  
to transgress it. *Pool's* Annotations.



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and had enter'd themselves into † the Service of *Achish*, King of *Gath*, he imprudently went to reclaim them, and, upon his Return, by *Solomon's* Order, was put to Death.

HAVING thus secur'd his Kingdom at home, by confining, or cutting off the Heads of the *Faction*, that was against him, *Solomon* bethought himself of strengthening his Interest *Abroad* by foreign Alliances; and, to this Purpose, married the Daughter of † *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt*, and appointed her at first an Apartment in his own Palace; but, after he had finish'd the Temple, built her a very stately Palace adjoining to his own, which she badly deserv'd; for, in Process of Time, this Woman, among others,

contributed not a little to the *Perversion* of *Solomon*.

HE began his Reign however with a good Sense of Religion upon his Mind; for which End, taking the Chief of the Officers and Nobility along with him, he went to *Gibeon*, where the *original Tabernacle* and *Altar*, that were made in the *Wilderness*, were kept, and there offer'd a Thousand Sacrifices; in Acknowledgment of God's Kindness to him, in placing him upon his Father's Throne. In the Night following, when God appear'd to him in a Vision, and promis'd to grant whatever he should ask, he begg'd him to give him † a wife and understanding Heart, and († considering his Youth and Inexperience) such Qualities, as were necessary

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

Begins his Reign with a good Sense of Religion.

† *Achish* had been so great a Friend to *David*, that, though *David* had conquer'd the *Philistines*, he suffer'd him still to retain the Title of a King, and only to be tributary to him; so that there was a friendly Correspondence between his City and *Jerusalem*, insomuch, that *Shimei* might easily hear, by somebody or other, that had been at *Gath*, that his Servants were there. These Servants, in all Probability, were such, as he had purchas'd with a considerable Sum of Money, and their Running away was not only a Loss, but a great Affront likewise to their Master; and therefore, partly out of *Rage*, and partly through *Covetousness*, he undertook this dangerous Journey, presuming, that a Thing, which might be done secretly and speedily, would never come to *Solomon's* Ears; that, in the Space of three Years Time, *Solomon* might have forgot his Injunction; or that, if he remember'd it, he would not be so rigid, as to put it in Execution; especially since he went out of *Jerusalem*, not through Wantonness, or any Contempt of *Authority*, but merely to recover what he had lost, which, he might think, was a Thing excusable. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Patrick's* Commentary.

† It may seem somewhat strange, that, in all the History of the *Jews*, from the Time of *Moses* to this of *Solomon*, no Mention should be made of the Kings of *Egypt*, as if they had no Concern in the Affairs of *Canaan*, but were wholly diverted some other Way: But for this, their own Historians account, when they tell us, that during this Space of Time, the *Egyptian Kings* did nothing worth recording, *Diodor. Biblioth. lib. i. p. 29.* All these Kings of *Egypt* were called *Pharaohs*; but *Pharaoh* was not a proper Name, but a Title of Dignity only, which importeth the same as *Sultan*, or *Emperor*. They had, besides this, other Names, and *Clemens Alexandrinus*, in a Passage taken from *Alexander Polyhistor*, tells us, that the proper Name of this *Egyptian King*, whose Daughter *Solomon* marry'd, was *Vaphres*. *Le Clerc's* and *Calmet's* Commentaries.

† Hereupon some *Jewish* Annotators have observ'd, that tho' *Solomon*, in his great Modesty, might request of God no more than the Gift of Government, or (as he expresses it) an understanding Heart to judge the People, and to discern between Good and Evil, 1 Kings iii. 9. yet God, out of his abundant Grace, gave him a general Knowledge of all other Things, as the following History informs us: And that, whereas other Men gather their Knowledge from Study and Observation, *Solomon* had his by an immediate Inspiration from God, insomuch, that he, who went to Bed as ignorant as other Men, awak'd in the Morning like an Angel of God. But though his Knowledge of Things was, in a great Measure, infus'd, yet he did not therefore neglect his Study. He gave his Heart to seek, and search out, by Wisdom, concerning all Things under the Sun; in which Search (as himself testifies, *Eccles. i. 13.*) he took no small Pains: So that his Gifts extraordinary did not supersede the Use of other Means, in the Acquisition of Knowledge, but by Application and Experience, he perfected what he had so advantageously receiv'd from the Hands of God. *Patrick's* and *Calmet's* Commentaries.

† The Words of *Solomon* himself are, — I am but a little Child: I know not how to go out, or how to come in, 1 Kings iii. 7. From whence some have infer'd, that he was not above twelve Years old when he spake them; but this must be a gross Miscomputation. His Father, when he left the Kingdom to him, calls him a wise Man, 1 Kings ii. 6, 9. The foregoing Story shews, that he had already sat some Time on the Throne; and therefore he calls himself a Child, not in Respect of his Years, (for most agree that he was twenty, when he began to reign) but his Skill in governing the People, and managing the Affairs of State. This was a modest Expression in *Solomon*; but it is an Observation of *Aristotle*, in his Book of *Politicks*, that young Men are unfit for Government, because their consultative Power is imperfect; which, though it may not be a general Rule, was deliver'd by *Solomon* himself, in his more mature Years, for a Maxim; for *Woe to the Land*, (says he, *Eccles. x. 16.*) whose King is a Child. *Patrick's* Commentary.



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necessary for the due Government of the People committed to his Charge ; which Petition God was so well pleas'd with, that, over and above the Wisdom which he ask'd, he promis'd to give him such Affluence of Riches and Honour, as no King, in his Days, should be able to equalize. When *Solomon* awak'd out of Sleep, he perceiv'd that this was a Dream sent from God ; and therefore, returning to *Jerusalem*, he presented himself before the Ark of the Covenant, which was plac'd in a *Tabernacle*, that *David* had made for it, and there he offer'd Sacrifices in Abundance.

And great Demonstrations of his Wisdom.

*S O L O M O N* (as we said) had obtain'd of God a Promise of the Gift of *Wisdom* ; and it was not long before he had an Opportunity of shewing it, to the great Satisfaction of all his Subjects. † Two Women, who both liv'd together in one House, were brought to Bed about the same Time, and one had overlaid her Child. She, who found the *dead* Child by her, accus'd the other of having stolen

away her *living* Child, and left her dead one in its Place : The other pertinaciously denied the Thing, so that the Question was, *To whom did this living Child belong ?* And to determine this, *Solomon* commanded some that stood by, to take and † cut the Child in two, and to give to each Woman half ; whereupon the *real* Mother begs that the Child may be sav'd, even tho' it be given to her Adversary, but the pretended one is clearly for dividing it ; which gave *Solomon* a full Conviction, that she, who express'd a *Tenderness* and *Compassion* for the Child, was its true Mother, and accordingly order'd it to be given her.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

THE Wisdom of the King soon shed an happy Influence over all his Dominions, and every Subject was, in some Degree or other, made Partaker of it. All *Judah* and *Israel* liv'd in the greatest Security ; and all the neighbouring Nations either paid him *Tribute*, or were his Friends and Allies. He rul'd over all the Countries and Kingdoms, † from the *Euphrates*

His large Dominions, and wonderful Learning, and Writings.

† These two Women are said in the *Text* to be *Harlots*, but the *Hebrew* Word (as we took Notice in the Case of *Rahab*) may equally signify an *Hostess*, or one, who kept an House of *publick* Entertainment ; and that it is so to be taken here, we have these Reasons to presume : — That, as all *publick Prostitution* was severely forbidden by the Law, *Deut. xxiii. 17.* Women of this infamous Character durst not have presented themselves before so just and so wise a King ; that Women of this leud Behaviour seldom do become Mothers of Children, and when they chance to have any, are not so solicitous for their Preservation, but rather rejoice when they have got rid of them. There is no Reason to suppose then, that these Women were common *Harlots* ; and yet it is generally thought, that they were both *unmarry'd* Persons, and guilty of *Fornication*, because no Mention is made of their Husbands, whose Office it was (if they had any) to contest the Matter for their Wives. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentaries.

† *Solomon* knew at once, that the only Sign that would discover the *true*, would be her Affection, and Compassion, and *Tenderness* for her Child ; and therefore, in order to distinguish between the two, his Business was to make Trial of this : And if we suppose, that, when he commanded the Child to be divided, he spake with a sedate Countenance, and seeming Earnestness, (as the *true* Mother's Petition to the King makes it apparent that he did) then we may suppose farther, not only the two Women, but all the People present with Horror and Admiration expecting the Execution of the Thing ; which, when it ended in so just a *Decision*, quite contrary to what they look'd for, rais'd Joy in every Breast, and gave a more advantageous Commendation to the Judge : And yet *Abarbinel*, the *Jewish* Commentator, thinks, that all this was no great Proof of *Solomon's* extraordinary Wisdom, nor could it beget that Fear or Reverence, which the *Text* says (1 *Kings* iii. 28.) it procur'd to his Person. His Opinion therefore is, that *Solomon* made a Discovery of the Truth antecedent to this *Experiment* ; that, by observing the Countenance, the Manner of Speech, and all the Motions of the Women, he discern'd the Secret of their Hearts, and penetrated to the Bottom of the Business ; and that his commanding the Child to be divided afterwards was only to notify to the Company, what he before had discover'd. However this be, it may not be improper, upon this Occasion, to mention an Instance or two out of profane History, of a singular *Address* (though much inferior to this) in discovering such Secrets, as seem'd to be past finding out. To this Purpose, *Suetonius* (in his Life of *Claudian*, Chap. 15.) tells us, how that Emperor discover'd a Woman to be the Mother of a young Man, whom she would not own for her Son, by commanding her to be marry'd to him ; for the Horror of committing *Incest* oblig'd her to declare the Truth ; and, in like Manner, *Diodorus Siculus* relates, how *Ariopharnes*, King of the *Thracians*, being appointed to arbitrate between three Men, who all pretended to be Sons of the King of the *Cimmerians*, and claim'd the Succession, found out the true Son and Heir, by ordering them to shoot, each Man his Arrow, into the dead King's Body, which one of them refusing to do, was deem'd the true Claimant. *Pool's* Annotations, *Patrick's* and *Calmet's* Commentaries.

† The Words in the *Text* are, *And Solomon reigned over all Kingdoms from the River unto the Land of the Philistines,*



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*Euphrates* to the Nile, and in many Places his Dominions extended beyond the *Euphrates*. He had a great Number of Horses and Chariots of War. Instances of his Wisdom were as numerous as *the Sands of the Sea*, and in Learning and Knowledge he † surpass'd all the *Orientals*, and the *Egyptians*. In a Word, he was

the wisest of Mankind, and his Reputation was spread thro' all Nations. He compos'd, or collected, \* *Three Thousand Proverbs*, and a † *Thousand and five Poems*. He knew the Virtue of all Plants and Trees, from the highest to the lowest; and in his Books treated of the Nature of † all Kinds of Beasts, and Birds,

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lines, and unto the Border of Egypt, 1 Kings iv. 21. for the Bounds of his Kingdom were to the East, the *Euphrates*, which is here, and in other Places of Scripture, called the *River*, without any Addition; to the West, the Country of the *Philistines*, which border'd upon the *Mediterranean-Sea*; and to the South, *Egypt*. So that *Solomon* had tributary to him the Kingdoms of *Syria*, *Damascus*, *Moab*, and *Ammon*, which lay between *Euphrates* and the *Mediterranean*; as indeed, without such a Number of tributary Kingdoms, we cannot conceive, how the Country of *Israel* could have furnish'd such a constant Supply of Provisions, and other Things necessary for the Support of this Prince's Grandeur. *Patrick's* and *Calmet's* Commentaries.

† There were three Nations in the East of Canaan, that were very famous for their Wisdom and Erudition; the *Chaldeans*, beyond the *Euphrates*; the *Persians*, beyond the *Tygris*; and the *Arabians*, on the nearer Side of the *Euphrates*, a little towards the South: But whether the *Persians* and *Chaldeans* were remarkable for their Learning in *Solomon's* Days, is much doubted among Commentators. The Book of *Job* sufficiently shews, that the *Arabians* (for of that Nation was *Job* and his Friends) were famous for their Learning in antient Times: And, as to the *Chaldeans* and other oriental People, since the Sons of *Noah* took up their Habitation about *Babylon*, and the neighbouring Countries, it is reasonable to suppose, that, where Mankind first began to settle themselves into regular Societies, there Arts and Sciences first began to appear. The *Egyptians* however pretend to a Precedency in this, and several other Accomplishments. They say, that the *Chaldeans* receiv'd the Principles of Philosophy at first from a Colony, that came from *Egypt*, as *Diodorus* indeed makes mention of such a Colony, conducted by *Belus*: But the *Chaldeans*, on the other Hand, maintain, that from them it was, that the *Egyptians* receiv'd their first Instructions, and (according to some) that *Abraham* was the Person, who first communicated to the *Chaldeans* the Knowledge of Astronomy, and other Sciences. However this be, *Solomon* receiv'd from God a perfect Knowledge of all that useful and solid Learning, for which the Eastern People, and the *Egyptians* were justly fam'd; for (as it follows) he was a great moral Philosopher, a great natural Philosopher, and an excellent Poet. *Patrick's* and *Calmet's* Commentaries.

\* *Josephus*, who lov'd to magnify every Thing, that concern'd *Solomon*, instead of *three Thousand Proverbs*, tells us, that *Solomon* compos'd *three Thousand Books of Proverbs*: The greater certainly is our Loss, (if the Thing were credible) because all the *Proverbs* of *Solomon*, that we have now, are compris'd in the Book, that goes under that Name, and in his *Ecclesiastes*; and yet some learned Criticks are of Opinion, that the nine first Chapters of the *Book of Proverbs* were not of *Solomon's* Composition, and that the Number of *Proverbs*, which properly belong to him, is no more than *six Hundred and Fifty*. *Grotius's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

† These, one would think, were *Poems* enough, for a Person, that had so much more other Business, as King *Solomon* had; but *Josephus*, who is never content, makes him the Author of *so many Volumes of poetical Compositions*; and the *Septuagint* indeed, as well as other Interpreters, make the Number of them to be no less, than *five Thousand Songs*, or *Odes*: But, of all this Number, we have none remaining, but *the Song of Songs*, as it is call'd; except the *Hundred and twenty-sixth Psalm*, which (in its Hebrew Title) is ascrib'd to *Solomon*, may be suppos'd to be one of these. The *Psalter of Solomon*, which contains eighteen *Psalms*, (a Work, that was found in Greek in the Library of *Ausburg*, and has been translated into Latin by *John Lewis de la Cerda*) is suppos'd by the Learned to be none of *Solomon's*, but of some *Hellenistical Jew*, much conversant in reading the sacred Authors, and who had compos'd them in Imitation of the *Psalms* of *David*, whose Style he closely pursu'd, and had inserted several Passages of the *Prophets*, (especially of *Isaiah* and *Ezekiel*) which he accommodated well enough to his Purpose. However this be, these *eighteen Psalms* were not unknown to the Antients; for they were formerly in the famous *Alexandrian Manuscript*, which is with us, as may be seen by the *Index*, which is still to be found at the End of the *New Testament*, though the *Psalms* themselves have either been torn out of the Book, or lost by some Accident. *Le Clerc's* and *Calmet's* Commentaries, and his Dictionary, under the Word *Solomon*.

† The several Books, which treated of the Nature and Virtue of Animals, as well as Plants, are suppos'd to have been lost in the *Babylonish Captivity*; but *Eusebius* (as he is quoted by *Anastasius*) informs us, that King *Heczekiah*, seeing the Abuse which his Subjects made of *Solomon's* Works, by placing too much Confidence in the Remedies which he prescrib'd, and the natural Secrets which he discover'd, thought proper to suppress them all. Notwithstanding this, since his Time, many Books, concerning the *Secrets of Magick*, *Medicine*, and *Inchantments*, have appear'd under the Name of this Prince; and several Pieces have been quoted, such as *the Instructions of Solomon to his Son Rehobaham*; *The Testament of Solomon*; *The Book of the Throne of Solomon*; *The Books of Magick*, compos'd by the Demons under the Name of *Solomon*; *The Clavicula*, or *Key of Solomon*; *The Ring of Solomon*; *The Contradiction of Solomon*, &c. which were most of them very wicked and pernicious Tracts, to which the Authors prefix'd this great Name, to give them more Credit and Sanction. 'Tis somewhat strange however, that *Josephus* should inform us, that *Solomon* compos'd Books of *Inchantments*, and several Manners of *Exorcisms*, or of driving away Devils, so that they could



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Birds, and Reptiles, and Fishes; info-  
much, that \* there was a Concourse of  
Strangers from all Countries to hear his  
Wisdom, and Embassadors from the most  
remote Princes, that had heard of his  
Fame.

His League  
and Contract  
with Hiram,  
King of Tyre,  
for Materials  
to build the  
Temple, which  
accordingly he  
finish'd.

As soon as *Hiram*, King of *Tyre*, un-  
derstood that *Solomon* was † made King  
of *Israel*, \* he sent Embassadors to him  
to condole his Father's Death, and con-  
gratulate him upon his Accession to the  
Throne: And, in a short Time after,  
*Solomon*, in Return, sent an Embassy to  
him, desiring him to supply him with  
Wood, and Workmen, and to lend him

his Assistance in Building *the Temple of the Lord*. *Hiram* very readily complied  
with his Desire, and sent him word,  
that he would order *Cedar-Trees*, and *Fir-  
Trees* to be cut down upon Mount *Liba-  
nus*; that his People should put them on  
*Floats*, and bring them by Sea to the  
Harbour of *Joppa*; and that from thence  
*Solomon*, (who contracted to give *Hiram*  
such a Quantity of Wheat and Wine,  
and Oil, &c. every Year for the Main-  
tenance of his Household, and Work-  
men) might send, and fetch them to *Je-  
rusalem*.

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xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

## A L L

could return no more; and that he should further assure us, that himself had seen Experiments of it by one *Elazar*, a  
*Jeau*, who, in the Presence of *Vespasian*, his Sons, and the Officers of his Army, cur'd several, that were possess'd.  
*Jewish Antiq. lib. viii. c. 2. and Calmer's Dictionary, under the Word Solomon.*

\* It is a Conceit of one of the *Jewish* Interpreters, that all the Kings of the neighbouring Countries went to  
hear the Wisdom of *Solomon*, and that, upon their Return, their Subjects came to them to hear what he had said;  
but as we hear of none, but the Queen of *Sheba*, who came to visit *Solomon*, we cannot but think, that if any  
other crown'd Heads had resorted to him, the History would have recorded them, as well as her. The Words denote  
no more, than that the Kings of all the neighbouring Nations sent their Embassadors, and People of every Land,  
that had heard of *Solomon's* Fame, came to see him; for "no Spectacle (says an ingenious Author) is more lovely and  
"grateful, than a wise and good King; all Men flock to see him, and to partake of his pious and prudent Mind.  
"They that see him, are loth to leave him, and they that hear of him, are as desirous to see him, as Children  
"are to find their unknown Father." *Dion Pruseus Orat. de Regno.*

† The ivth Chapter of the first of *Kings* is chiefly taken up in recording the Prime Ministers and Officers of *Solo-  
mon's* Court, the Compass and Extent of his Kingdom, the Happiness and Security of his Subjects, the Pomp and  
Magnificence of his Living, and the Excellence of his own Wisdom and Erudition.

\* This *Hiram* was doubtless the Son of that other *Hiram*, who sent *David* Timber and Artificers, wherewith to  
build his Palace: For, if (according to *Josephus*) the Temple was built in the twelfth Year of *Hiram's* Reign, and  
the fourth of *Solomon's*, this *Hiram* could not be the same with him, who sent *David* Men and Materials; because  
that *Hiram* was upon the Throne, when *David* took *Jerusalem*, which happen'd to be three and thirty Years be-  
fore *Solomon* began his Reign. There are two Letters, which pass'd between this *Hiram* and King *Solomon*, recorded  
by *Josephus*, and for the Authentickness of which, he appeals both to the *Jewish* and *Tyrian* Records, that are to  
this Effect:

"King Solomon, to Hiram, greeting.

"Be it known unto thee, O King, that my Father *David* had it a long Time in his Mind and Purpose to erect  
"a Temple to the Lord; but being perpetually in War in his Days, and under a Necessity of clearing his Hands  
"of his Enemies, and making them all his Tributaries, before he could attend this great and holy Work, he hath  
"left it to me, in a Time of Peace, both to begin and finish it, according to the Direction, as well as Prediction of  
"the Almighty. Blessed be his great Name for the present Tranquillity of my Dominions! And, by his gracious  
"Assistance, I shall now dedicate the best Improvements of this Liberty and Leisure to his Honour and Worship.  
"Wherefore I make it my Request, that you will let some of your People go along with some Servants of mine to  
"Mount *Libanus*, to assist them in cutting down Materials towards this Building; (for the *Sydonians* understand it much  
"better than we do) and as for the Workmen's Reward, or Wages, whatever you think reasonable shall be punctually  
"paid to them."

"King Hiram, to King Solomon.

"Nothing could have been more welcome to me, than to understand, that the Government of your blessed Father  
"is, by God's Providence, devolv'd into the Hands of so excellent, so wise, and so virtuous a Successor. His holy  
"Name be prais'd for it! That which you write for shall be done with all Care and good Will: For I will give Or-  
"ders to cut down, and export such Quantities of the fairest *Cedars*, and *Cypress-Trees*, as you shall have Occasion  
"for. My People shall bring them to the Sea-Side for you, and from thence ship them away to what Port you please,  
"where they may lie ready for your own Men to transport them to *Jerusalem*. It would be a great Obligation,  
"after all this, to allow us such a Provision of Corn in Exchange, as may stand with your Convenience; for that is  
"the Commodity, that we *Islanders* want most." *Jewish Antiq. lib. viii. c. 2.* But notwithstanding all his Appeal  
to the *Tyrian* Records, some have suspected *Josephus*, as to the Genuineness of these two Letters, especially where they  
find him bringing in *Hiram*, speaking of *Tyre*, as if it had been an Island, whereas it is plain, that the *Old Tyre*,  
which was then standing, and must be the Place here spoken of, was situate on the Continent. *Le Clerc's Com-  
mentary.*



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ALL Things being thus agreed on, the Preparations for the Building of the Temple went on apace. Seventy Thousand *Profelytes*, who were the Remains of the antient *Canaanites*, *Solomon* employ'd in carrying Burdens upon their Shoulders; fourscore Thousand, in cutting Stone out of the Quarries; and three Thousand six hundred, in overseeing the Work. Of his own *Subjects*, he sent thirty Thousand to work with the King of *Tyre's* Men in the Quarries of *Libanus*: And (to finish the inner Part of the Temple, as well as frame some of its choicest Vessels) *Hiram* \* sent him a most skilful Artist of his own Name, whose Mother was of the Tribe of *Dan*, but his Father a *Tyrian*; and (what was prodigious) his Abilities extended to all Kind of Works, whether in Gold, Silver, Brasses, or Iron, whether in Linnen, Ta-

pestry, or Embroidery; and by his Direction all the curious *Furniture* of the Temple was both design'd and finish'd.

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AND now all Things being in Readiness, the Foundation of the Temple was laid in the † fourth Year of King *Solomon's* Reign, in the Year of the *Creation* two Thousand nine Hundred and ninety two, four Hundred and eighty Years after the *Israelites* Escape from the *Egyptian* Bondage; and, in the \* Space of seven Years and an half, was compleated with such *Dexterity*, that neither \* *Hammer*, nor *Ax*, nor any Tool of Iron was heard in it, all the while that it was building. Such admirable Care and Contrivance was us'd, in preparing, and adjusting the *Materials*, before they were brought together!

The

\* In former Times, among the *Hebrews*, there had been very excellent Workmen, who knew how to cut and engrave precious Stones, to cast, and work upon Metals, &c. but this was before they came into the Land of *Canaan*, in the Time of *Moses*, when *Bazaleel* and *Aboliab* were excellent in many different Arts, which were necessary for the Work of the Temple; but, as the Scripture acquaints us, that they had their Skill by Inspiration from God, it does not appear that they had any Successors: And, after the People had got Possession of *Canaan*, they neglected all Manufactures, and apply'd themselves wholly to Agriculture, and feeding of Cattle; so that, in the Time of *Solomon*, there were no profess'd Artists, that could undertake the Work of the Temple, but in *Tyre* and *Sidon* there were many; for, both in his *Iliads* and his *Odyssey*, *Homer* gives the People of these two Places this Character, whom (upon every Turn) he calls *Πολυδαίδαλους*, i. e. *excellent Artists in several Kinds of Works*. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† If it be ask'd, why *Solomon* did not begin the Building of the Temple sooner, and even in the first Year of his Reign, since his Father had left him a *Plan*, and all Things necessary for the Undertaking? *Abarbinel's* Answer is, — That *Solomon* would not make use of what his Father had prepar'd, but was resolv'd to build this Temple all at his proper Cost and Charge. He therefore put into the *Treasure of the Lord's House* all, that *David* had dedicated to the Work; and, to gather together as much Gold and Silver, as was necessary to defray so vast an Expence, *four Years* can be accounted no unreasonable Time. Nay, even suppose that he made use of the *Treasure*, which his Father had amass'd, yet, if the *Materials*, that his Father had provided, lay at a considerable Distance, and were left rude and unfashion'd, it would cost all this Time to form them into the exact Symmetry, wherein the Scripture represents them, before they were brought together, especially considering that the very Stones, which made the Foundation, were very probably vast *Blocks of Marble*, or *Porphyry*, 1 Kings v. 17. And all polish'd in the most exquisite Manner. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Pool's Annotations*.

\* The Temple itself indeed was but a small Edifice, but the many Courts and Offices, that were about it, made the Whole a vast Pile, and the Exquiteness of the Art, and Fewness of the Artists, that could be employ'd about it, made a longer Time requisite. It must be own'd however, that, considering all Things, *Solomon* made an extraordinary Dispatch: For, if the Building of *Diana's Temple* at *Ephesus*, employ'd all *Asia*, for the Space of two hundred Years, and no less than three hundred and sixty Thousand Men, for twenty Years together, were taken up in erecting one *Pyramid*, (as *Pliny*, lib. xxxvi. c. 12. affirms) no reasonable Man can wonder, that this Temple was seven Years and an half in building. *Pool's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

\* The *Jewish* Doctors have entertain'd a very odd *Conceit*, upon the Occasion of this Passage in the sacred History, wherein the Temple is said to have been built without Noise. They tell us, that the *Demon Asmodeus* drove *Solomon* once from his Throne, and reign'd in his Place, while that Prince was forc'd to travel over the several Kingdoms, and Provinces of the World; but that, at his Return to *Jerusalem*, he defeated *Asmodeus*, and having chain'd him so, that he could do no Hurt, he compelled him to teach him the Art of cutting Stones for the Temple, without making any Noise, which was done, as they say, not with any Tool or Instrument, but by the Help of a *Worm*, called *Samir*, which cuts and polishes Stone with a marvellous Facility. But the Foundation of all this Fiction (as *Bochart*, Hieroz. p. 2. lib. vi. c. 11. has observ'd) is laid in Somebody's mistaking the Sense of the Word *Samir*, which signifies a very hard Stone, called *Smiris*, that is, of use to cut and polish other Stones, and which *Solomon's*

Workmen



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2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

## The OBJECTION.

“ **B**UT how commendable soever the  
“ Zeal both of *David*, and his Son  
“ *Solomon*, to build the Temple of the  
“ Lord, might be; yet we are much in  
“ the wrong, if we think, that this would  
“ be any *Commutation* for the Blood and  
“ Cruelty, which the sacred Historian  
“ seems to leave charg’d upon them.

“ *DAVID* had given *Saul* the most  
“ solemn Assurance upon Oath, that (*k*)  
“ *he would not cut off his Seed, nor destroy*  
“ *his Name out of his Father’s House*; he  
“ knew full well too, that it was an ex-  
“ press Command in the Law, that (*l*)  
“ *Children should not be put to death for*  
“ *the Fathers, but that every Man should*  
“ *be put to death for his own Sin*: And  
“ yet, notwithstanding this double Obli-  
“ gation, we find him tamely giving up  
“ seven of *Saul’s* innocent Progeny (which  
“ he had promis’d to protect) into the  
“ Hands of bloody-minded Men, by  
“ them to be hung up, as long as they  
“ thought fit, in Order to atone for what  
“ *Saul* had done amiss; and to appease the  
“ Wrath of God, as if he (like the  
“ Idol *Moloch*) could be pleas’d with the  
“ Tortures of the Innocent, or took de-  
“ light in the Oblation of human Blood.

“ *SAUL’s* Family was very nume-  
“ rous indeed, and some of them might,  
“ in Process of Time, grow up to be an-  
“ other *Ishboseth* to *David*, and give him  
“ some Disturbance in his *Usurpation*. It  
“ was highly necessary, therefore, to dis-  
“ patch those, of whom he might have  
“ any such Apprehension, and (if any  
“ were to be left) to spare such only, as  
“ were lame and impotent, and incapable

“ to dispute his Title. This, in all Pro-  
“ bability, was the Motive of his shewing  
“ some Favour to *Mephibosheth*, because  
“ (*m*) *he was lame in both his Feet*; and  
“ yet he was minded to cut him short and  
“ keep him low, when he granted away  
“ his Estate (without ever giving him a  
“ fair Hearing) to a vile and perfidious  
“ Servant; and, notwithstanding his clear-  
“ ing his Character from every false As-  
“ persion thrown on it, still continuing  
“ the base Informer in the full Possession  
“ of half of it.

“ WHAT the Zeal of King (*n*) *Saul*  
“ to the Children of *Israel* and *Judah*  
“ might be, that led him into the Error  
“ of destroying the *Gibeonites*, we cannot  
“ tell; but surely it is unaccountable,  
“ why God did not immediately chastise  
“ him for it, instead of deferring his Pu-  
“ nishment, and at last transferring it to  
“ his Posterity. His Posterity perhaps  
“ might be justly included in his Punish-  
“ ment; but what had the whole Na-  
“ tion done to deserve a Famine of three  
“ Years Continuance? \* *That be far from*  
“ *thee, O Lord, to slay the Righteous with*  
“ *the Wicked, and that the Righteous*  
“ *should be as the Wicked, that be far*  
“ *from thee; for shall not the Judge of all*  
“ *the Earth do right?*

“ WE readily grant, that *David’s* re-  
“ sisting the Importunity of his Officers,  
“ and promising *Shimei* his Life, when so  
“ many were ready to put him to Death,  
“ was an Act of great Generosity, con-  
“ sidering the Heinousness of his Crime;  
“ but this Promise he utterly cancels, when  
“ he leaves it with his Son, as his dying  
Injunction,

Workmen might possibly have Recourse to upon this Occasion. But the true Reason why no Noise was heard, in the building of the Temple, was, that the Stones, and all other Materials were hewn, and squar’d, and sited at a Distance, so that, when they were brought to the Place, where the Temple was to stand, there was nothing to do but to join them together. And this might be done, not only for the Ease and Convenience of the Carriage, but for the Magnificence of the Work, and the Commendation of the Workmen’s Skill and Ingenuity. *Pool’s* Annotations, and *Calmer’s* Dictionary, under the Word *Solomon*.

(*k*) 1 Sam. xxiv. 21.  
\* Gen. xviii. 25.

(*l*) Deut. xxiv. 16.

(*m*) 2 Sam. ix. 13.

(*n*) Ibid. xxi. 2.



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“ Injunction, (o) *not to hold him guiltless,*  
“ *but to bring down his hoary Head to the*  
“ *Grave with Blood:* Nor can we con-  
“ ceive for what Reason he, who durst  
“ not attempt to punish *Joab* in his Life-  
“ Time, should now upon his Death-Bed,  
“ (a proper Season for Forgiveness) re-  
“ commend the dangerous and ungrateful  
“ Task to his Son, (p) who was but  
“ young, and as yet unsettled on his  
“ Throne.

“ OUR blessed Saviour lays it down for  
“ a Rule of good *Policy* among Princes,  
“ to keep an Estimate of their Forces;  
“ for (q) *what King going to War against*  
“ *another King, says he, sitteth not first*  
“ *down, and consulteth, whether he be able,*  
“ *with ten Thousand, to meet him, that*  
“ *cometh against him with twenty Thou-*  
“ *sand?* And therefore, if *David* was  
“ minded to take an Account of the  
“ military Men in his Kingdom, where  
“ was the great Offence against God?  
“ *David*, who knew himself best, and  
“ with what Purpose he number'd the  
“ People, might perhaps have Reason to  
“ say, *I have sinned, (r) I have done*  
“ *wickedly;* but his following Words,  
“ *viz. these Sheep, what have they done?*  
“ are a sad Imputation upon the Divine  
“ Justice; for, upon the Presumption  
“ that they were *innocent*, how could  
“ they, with any Justice, be punish'd  
“ with a raging Pestilence, for the Trans-  
“ gression of their King?

“ THE Truth is, there are so many  
“ *Contradictions, and Inconsistencies* in this  
“ whole Story, (s) that there is no recon-  
“ ciling it to itself. In one Place it is said,  
“ that (t) *God moved David to number*  
“ *Israel*, and in another, that (u) *Satan*  
“ *provoked him to it:* But it were highly  
“ *profane and blasphemous*, to say, that  
“ God conspir'd with *Satan* in this Act,  
“ on Purpose to destroy a Multitude of

“ *innocent Persons.* In like Manner to  
“ say, (x) *that there were in Israel eight*  
“ *hundred Thousand valiant Men, that*  
“ *drew the Sword, and in Judah five hun-*  
“ *dred Thousand,* besides Women and  
“ Children, old Men that were unfit for  
“ War, and two entire Tribes, that were  
“ not number'd, is a Thing incredible.  
“ For, (y) if in a Nation, the Men, that  
“ are able to bear Arms, are generally  
“ accounted the *fifth* Part of it, the Sum  
“ total of the *ten Tribes* only, that were  
“ number'd, will amount to above six  
“ Millions, which (together with the  
“ Tribes unnumber'd) will make up a  
“ Multitude, too large for so small a  
“ Country, as that of *Canaan*, to main-  
“ tain.

“ WHAT the Constitution of the  
“ *Jewish* Monarchy was, it is difficult to  
“ say: Kings, from the first, might have  
“ the *Right* of nominating their Successors;  
“ but certainly *David* would never have  
“ postpon'd his eldest Son *Adonijah*, had  
“ he not been in his *Dotage*, and there-  
“ fore influenc'd by his Wife to chuse her  
“ Son *Solomon*; But after all, what great  
“ Offence had *Adonijah* done, in desiring  
“ *Abisbag* for his Wife? Or how does it  
“ appear, that, by soliciting this *Alliance*,  
“ he affected to supplant *Solomon* of the  
“ Kingdom? To have put him under  
“ some civil Restraint might have been  
“ excusable, but to take away his Life  
“ upon that Account, without any regular  
“ *Process, or License* given him to make  
“ his Defence, was, to the last Degree,  
“ *arbitrary and tyrannical.* Especially, con-  
“ sidering that himself was never known  
“ to set any Bounds to his Love, and, in  
“ marrying of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, had  
“ trampled upon a Law, which oblig'd the  
“ King as well as the People, (z) *to make*  
“ *no Covenant* with idolatrous Nations,  
“ nor to enter into Marriages with them,  
“ for

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

(o) 1 Kings ii. 9.

(p) Calmer's Commentary.

(q) Luke xiv. 31.

(r) 2 Sam. xxiv. 17.

the Account in 1 Chron. xxi. 5. is much higher, for there it is said, that all they of *Israel* were a *Thousand Thousand*, and an *hundred Thousand Men, that drew the Sword*, and of *Judah*, *four hundred threescore and ten Thousand*.

(s) Christianity as old as the Creation, p. 266.

(t) 2 Sam. xxiv. 1.

(u) 1 Chron. xxi. 1.

(x) 2 Sam.

xxiv. 9.

(y) Le Clerc in Locum.

(z) Exod. xxxiv. 16. and Deut. vii. 3, 4.



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“ for fear that *their Daughters* should  
“ draw them aside, *to go a whoring after*  
“ *their Gods*, whereof himself was a no-  
“ torious Instance.

“ WHAT the *Constitution* of the *Jewish*  
“ Church was, and how far *subordinate*  
“ to the *civil* Power, 'tis no easy Matter  
“ to determine; but *Solomon* seems to have  
“ transcended his Authority, when (a) he  
“ thrust out *Abiathar* from being *Priest*  
“ unto the Lord, merely for advising  
“ *Adonijah* to marry the late King's Con-  
“ cubine. But well might the Writer of  
“ his Life extend the *Royal Prerogative*  
“ beyond its just Bounds, when we find  
“ him so very lavish in his Account of  
“ other Matters, as quite to transcend all  
“ Possibility of Truth. For what shall we  
“ say to his making *Solomon* hold a long  
“ Conference with God in his Sleep; and  
“ representing *that* as a Divine Revelation,  
“ which was only the Result of an idle  
“ Dream? What shall we say to the  
“ *Thousand (b) Burnt-Offerings* which he  
“ makes him sacrifice at *Gibeon*, and all on  
“ one Altar only, that was of no larger (c)  
“ *Dimensions*, than *five Cubits square*? To  
“ the *forty Thousand Stalls* (some Inter-  
“ preters make them so many *Stables*) for  
“ *Horses*, which he gives him; and yet  
“ his *Horse-Men* were no more than  
“ *twelve Thousand*; and to (d) the *fourteen*  
“ *Hundred Chariots of War* which he  
“ informs us he kept, when some of the  
“ greatest Princes in After-Ages had not  
“ half that Number, and God's general  
“ Injunction to the King of *Israel* was,  
“ (e) that he should not multiply *Horses* to  
“ himself?

“ THESE are some of the Faults and  
“ Failings (to give them the softest Term  
“ we can) of *David* and his Son *Solomon*,  
“ whom the sacred Historian endeavours  
“ to extol, tho' it be at the Expence of  
“ some *Absurdities*, and *Self-Contradictions*. The most remarkable Part of  
“ their Story is, their Concern for the

“ Building of the *Temple* at *Jerusalem*; From 2 Sam.  
“ and yet it is very justly to be question'd, xix. to 1 Kings  
“ whether in this they deserv'd any Praise, viii.  
“ or did God any real Service, since (f)  
“ *the Most High dwelleth not in Temples*  
“ *made with Hands*, as the *Apostle* testifies;  
“ for (g) *the Heaven is my Throne*, and  
“ *the Earth is my Foot-Stool*, saith the  
“ Lord, *where then is the House which ye*  
“ *build for me*, or *where is the Place of*  
“ *my Rest*?”

THERE is hardly any one Passage in Scripture more difficult to give a satisfactory Account of, than this Relation of *Saul's Cruelty* to the *Gibeonites*; because we have little or no Intimation, either *when*, or *where*, or *why*, their Slaughter was committed. Answer'd, by showing the Occasion of Saul's murdering the Gibeonites.

THE *Gibeonites* were not of the *Children of Israel*, but the Remains of the *Amorites*, who, upon *Joshua's* taking Possession of the *promis'd Land*, impos'd upon him and his Counsellors, and cunningly drew the *Israelites* into a League with them, which was instantly confirm'd by an Oath; and, because it was so confirm'd, for above three hundred Years, was reputed inviolable. But tho' the *Gibeonites*, by their Craft and Fallacy, sav'd their Lives, yet it was upon this Condition, that they should (h) become *Hewers of Wood*, and *Drawers of Water* for the Service of the *Tabernacle*. Now while the *Tabernacle* was at *Nob*, which was a City of the *Priests*, and where some of the *Gibeonites*, their Attendants, may be suppos'd to reside, the sacred History informs us, that *Saul*, (i) in Revenge to the *Priests*, whom he took to be Favourers of *David's Cause*, destroy'd the City, and massacred all the Inhabitants thereof; so that several of the *Gibeonites* must have been slain upon this Occasion, and for the shedding of their Blood this *Famine* was sent. This is the Account which some learned Men give us of the Matter: But they never consider'd, (k) that as *Saul's*  
Sin,

(a) 1 Kings ii. 27.  
2 Chron. ix. 25.  
ix. 23.

(b) Ibid. iii. 4.  
(e) Deut. xvii. 16.  
(i) 1 Sam. xxii. 17.

(c) Patrick in Locum.  
(f) Acts vii. 48.  
(k) Le Clerc's Commentary on 2 Sam. xxi. 1,

(d) Vid. 1 Kings iv. 26. and  
(g) Isaiah lxvi. 1.  
(h) Josh.



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Sin, in murdering the *Priests*, was greater, than in slaying the *Gibeonites*, God should have inflicted this severe Punishment upon the Land for the *greater Sin*, rather than the *less*. It has been said indeed, that for the Slaughter of the *Priests*, God had aveng'd himself on *Saul* before, by suffering him and his Sons to be slain in Battle by the *Philistines*, but that the Slaughter of the *Gibeonites* was not as yet expiated; yet it will be difficult to conceive, why there should be two different and distinct Punishments for one and the same Sin committed at the self-same Time.

WHEN, or by whom, or on what Occasion, the *Tabernacle* and *Altar* of Burnt-Offerings, which were made by *Moses* in the *Wilderness*, were remov'd from *Nob* to *Gibeon* we cannot tell, because the Scripture is silent: But 'tis the Conjecture of (*l*) some learned Men, that it was not long after the Murder of the *Priests* at *Nob*, and that *Saul*, very probably, to regain the Favour of the People, which he found he had lost by being so barbarous to Men of their sacred Character, quarrell'd with the *Gibeonites*, and banish'd them out of their City, in order to make room for the *Tabernacle of the Lord*.

THE Scripture indeed acquaints us, that (*m*) *he sought to slay the Gibeonites in his Zeal to the Children of Israel and Judah*; where the Expression seems to denote, (*n*) that the Children of *Israel* envied these miserable People, insomuch that *Saul* thought he could not do a more popular Act, than to cut them off.

BUT by the *Children of Israel*, (*o*) some rather understand the Tribe of *Benjamin* in particular, *viz.* that very Tribe from whence King *Saul* descended, and thence they infer, that his *Zeal*, or earnest Desire to promote his own Tribe to Riches and Grandeur, made him seek Occasion to fall foul upon the *Gibeonites*, in order that the three Cities, which they possess'd in the Territories of *Benjamin*, might fall

into his Hands, and so be divided among his own Family. That he either had, or intended to advance and enrich his own Tribe, is manifest from these Words of his; (*p*) *Hear now, ye Benjamites, will the Son of Jesse give every one of you Fields and Vineyards, and make you all Captains of Thousands, and Captains of Hundreds*; i. e. will he do for you, as I have, and mean to do? Now, if we look into the Actions of *Saul*, we do not find, that he made any Purchase of the Possessions of another Tribe, or, that he took from his Enemies any considerable Territories, in order to accommodate his *Benjamites*, and are therefore left to suppose, that the *Fields* and *Vineyards*, wherewith he enrich'd them, he unjustly acquir'd by destroying and dispossessing the *Gibeonites*. 'Tis but supposing then, that some of the *chief* of these *Gibeonites* had, in some Instance or other, offended *Saul*, for which he was minded to destroy the whole Race; or, that he had cast a greedy Eye upon their Lands and Possessions, which, in case of their *Excision*, would be forfeited to the *Crown*, and so might be given to his own Family; and then he had *Allegations* plausible enough against them, pretending, "That it was not for the Honour or Interest of God's People, to nourish any of that *viperous* Brood in their Bosoms; and that, however *Joshua* and the *Princes*, who then bore Sway, had by their Fraud been drawn into an Oath to preserve them, yet, in Truth, that Oath was contrary to God's Command, which requir'd them (*q*) to *smite them, and utterly destroy them*, and therefore ought not, as he thought, to be observ'd."

THUS *Saul* might set up for a Restorer of the Divine Laws to their ancient Rigour, and Strictness of *Execution*, and a Supplier of the Default of *Joshua*, and the *Princes of Israel*, in sparing the *Gibeonites*, even tho' they were compris'd in the general Ordinance of Extirpation; and, under

9 U

this

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

(*l*) *Calmet's Commentary* on 1 Sam. xxii. 19.  
*History of the Life of King David*, Vol. III.

(*m*) 2 Sam. xxi. 2.

(*p*) 1 Sam. xxii. 7.

(*n*) *Le Clerc* in Locum.

(*q*) Deut. vii. 2.

(*o*) The

How the Isra-  
elites might  
become cul-  
pable.



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2981, &c.  
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this Character, he might easily draw in his own Subjects to abet, and assist his Cruelty against a poor People, for whom they had never any good Liking. *Regis ad exemplum* is the known *Maxim*, and therefore we may easily suppose, that a wicked and hard-hearted People, who had assisted *Saul* in the Persecution of *David*; had adher'd to *Absalom* in his *Rebellion* against his own Father; and who, at the Beck of so many impious Princes, left the true Worship of God, and fell into Idolatry; would not be backward to assist *Saul*, in putting in Execution any of his Contrivances against the poor *Gibeonites*. And if so, we cannot but admire the Wisdom, and Justice of God, in making the Punishment *national*, when the *whole Nation* (for aught we know) was confederate with *Saul* in murdering the *Gibeonites*, or guilty at least in not hindering it; when the *next Generation* was involv'd in the Guilt, by not repairing the Injury as much as possible, or not expressing their Horror and Detestation of it by some *publick* Act; when an Act of Discipline might, at this Time, be necessary, to preserve the remaining *Gibeonites* from Insults, to beget in the *Israelites* a proper Respect for them, to prevent the like Murders for the future, and the like Breaches of *national* Compacts.

And God might  
justly punish  
them.

NAY, supposing the People, who liv'd in that Time, when the Famine prevail'd, to be never so *innocent* of the Blood of the *Gibeonites*, yet it cannot be denied, but that God (who is the Author and Giver of Life) has an absolute Right over the Lives of all, and can recall that Gift, whenever he pleases: And (r) therefore, if, in the Case before us, he made a Demand (as certainly he had a Right to do it) of so many Lives at such a Time, and in such a Manner, as might best answer the Ends of *Discipline*; then, that which was *just* in other Views, and without any such special Reason, could not become *unjust*, by having that *additional* Reason to

recommend it. In a Word, if the Thing was righteous, consider'd merely as an *Act of Dominion* in God, it could not but be both righteous and kind, by being made, at the same Time, an *Act of Discipline* for the Punishment of Sin and Perfidy, and the Promotion of Justice and Godliness among Men.

From 2 Sam.  
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viii.

WE must all allow, that God, as he is a most just and righteous Being, can never require, that the *Innocent* should die for the *Guilty*; and therefore we have Reason to believe, that, when *Saul* (for Reasons above-mention'd) was so outrageous against the *Gibeonites*, his Sons, and Grandsons, might be the Instruments of his Cruelty, and very probably bear some Part in the *military* Execution. For it frequently so happens, that whatever a King commands, be it never so abominable, is generally approv'd, and executed by his Family; and therefore, (s) when we are told, from the Mouth of God, that the Plague, sent upon the People, was *for Saul, and his bloody House, because † he slew the Gibeonites*; it seems to be evident, that it was for their Guilt, as well as his; nor can we imagine, that this Guilt of theirs could be any Thing less, than that of being the Executioners in this Slaughter. 'Tis plain, that they were his *Captains of Thousands, and Captains of Hundreds*; and it is as plain, that, as such, they must be the Instruments of his Cruelty; for if they were not, why are they call'd *bloody*. They refus'd indeed (t) to slaughter the *Priests* at his Command, but there is no Reason to believe, that they were so scrupulous in Regard to the *Gibeonites*; and if they were not, is there less Equity, in God's destroying their Sons for the Sins of their Fathers, which they adopted and shar'd in, than there was in his destroying *Jehoram*, the Son of *Ahab*, for that Vineyard, which the Father had cruelly and unjustly acquir'd, and Son as unjustly detain'd?

How Saul's  
Sons and  
Grandsons,  
might be cul-  
pable.

WITHOUT

(r) Scripture Vindicated, Part ii.

† The Words, which we render *he slew*, might as properly be render'd *they slew*.

(t) The History of the Life of King *David*, Vol. III.

(s) 1 Sam. xxii. 17.



A. M.  
2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

WITHOUT calling then to our Assistance God's great Prerogative, (u) of *visiting the Sins of the Father upon the Children unto the third and fourth Generation*, we may fairly say, that, if these Descendants of *Saul* did either concur in this Murder of the *Gibeonites*, when *doing*, or avow and defend it, when *done*, they became culpable upon their own, as well as their Ancestors Account, and thereupon justly deserv'd to be deliver'd up to the Resentment of a People, that had suffer'd so much by their *Inhumanity*.

Why God delay'd their Punishment so long.

UPON this Supposition then, (for it is by Suppositions that we must go in this obscure Part of History) that both the *People* and the *Princes of the Blood* were *accessary*, or *instrumental* to *Saul's Cruelty*, the Reason why God delay'd their Punishment so long is obvious; even because his infinite Goodness waited for their Repentance, which *Goodness* we badly requite, if we pervert it as an Argument against his *Providence*. For may not God be gracious and merciful as long as he pleases? Or have we any Right to set Bounds to his Patience and Long-suffering? 'Tis but supposing then, that, while God continu'd in this State of Expectance, upon some special Occasion or other, to us unknown, both the *People of Israel* and *Saul's Posterity* might discover, that they were so far from repenting, that they gloried in the Murder of the *Gibeonites*, and this would determine God, who had hitherto waited for their Penitence in vain, to pour out his Indignation upon them, and exact a severe Punishment both for their Cruelty and Obstinacy.

The Gibeonites superstitious Notions.

WHETHER the *Gibeonites* did right or wrong in exacting so severe a *Retaliation*, as that of hanging up seven of *Saul's* Progeny, for the Injury that he and his Family had done them, the sacred History is no ways concern'd. It relates the *Transaction* just as it happen'd; but to

shew us from whence this *barbarous Custom of hanging up Men* to appease the Anger of the Gods did proceed, it *pre-faces* the Account of the Matter, with this Observation: — (x) *These Gibeonites were not of the Children of Israel*, (for among them they learnt no such Practice) *but a Remnant of the Amorites*, who were addicted to this horrid *Superstition*, of which the *Gibeonites* (notwithstanding their Abode among People of better Sentiments) still retain'd some Tincture, and propounded it to *David*, as an *Expedient* to make the Earth become fruitful again; (y) *Let seven of Saul's Sons be given unto us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord*.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

THE Scripture, you see, speaks in the *Dialect* of these People; but from thence we make a wrong Conclusion, if we think, that God can be delighted with *human Sacrifices*, which so frequently, and so vehemently we find him declaiming against, and professing his utter Detestation of. He desires the Death, or Punishment of no Man, except it be in Pursuance of the Ends of his wise Providence, or when the *Criminal*, by his bad Conduct, has forfeited his Life to the *Government*, he lives under; nor would he have requir'd the Execution of any of *Saul's* Posterity, had it not been to procure the poor distress'd *Gibeonites* (who were true Drudges to their *Hebrew Masters*) a kinder Treatment, and better Quarter for the future; had it not been to testify his Abhorrence of all Oppression and Violence; to shew, that the Cries of the meanest *Slave*, as well as of the mightiest Monarch, *enter the Ears* of the most High; that with him there is no Respect of Persons, but *the Rich and the Poor to him are both alike*: (z) Had it not been, to repair the Injury done to his most holy Name, in the Violation of the Compact, which both *Joshua*, and the *Princes of Israel* made with this People, and confirm'd with the Solemnity of an *Oath*: Had it not been

The Reasons of God's exacting this Punishment.

(u) Exod. xx. 5.  
Locum.

(x) 2 Sam. xxi. 2.

(y) Ibid. ver. 6.

(z) Calmer's Commentary in



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2931, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1013, &c.

been by this exemplary Punishment, to give Mankind a Lesson of Instruction, concerning the *Sacredness* of *Oaths* and *Treaties*, and how religiously they ought to be observ'd, even towards those, that are in the lowest State and Circumstances of Life.

UNDER these Considerations only could the Death of *Saul's* Sons be acceptable to God; and how far *David*, in like Manner, came to be concern'd in it, we shall now proceed to consider.

That David  
had no De-  
sign to destroy  
Saul's Family.

BOTH the *Septuagint*, and *vulgar Latin* Translation make the Demand of the *Gibeonites*, when *David* sent to offer them Satisfaction, run in this Strain: — (a) *The Man, who consumed us, and oppressed us unjustly, we ought utterly to destroy, so as not to leave one of his Race remaining in any of the Coasts of Israel*; and in this Demand, we may presume, that they persisted, until *David*, partly by his Authority, and partly by kind Intreaties prevail'd with them to be content with *seven* only. Here then was a fair Opportunity for *David* (had he been so minded) to have cut off the whole Race of *Saul* as it were at one Blow, and to have avoided all the Odium of the Action, by but barely saying, “That the *Gibeonites* demanded *all*, and “his Instructions from *God* were, to “grant whatever they demanded.” But, instead of that, we find him, before this happen'd, making Enquiry for such (b) *as were left of Saul's Family, that he might shew Kindness to them for Jonathan's Sake*; interposing his good Offices here with the *Gibeonites*, to have them abate the *Keeneness* of their Resentment, and make the Slaughter of *Saul's* devoted House as moderate as possible; and, after that Slaughter was over, (c) giving them a publick and solemn Interment, *with the Bones of Saul and Jonathan his Son*, in the Sepulchre of their Ancestors, and himself attending them in Person to the Grave.

THE Death of *Saul's* Posterity, pro-

cur'd by the *Gibeonites*, had it not proceeded from God's positive Command, but been only a *plausible Pretence* for *David* to get rid of his Rivals in Empire, (d) we cannot imagine, why he should slay no more than *seven* of these Descendants; why he should cut off only *collateral* Branches, and spare all those, who were in a direct Line of Succession to the Throne; why he spar'd *Ishbosheth*, his Competitor for the Kingdom, whom, by *Abner's* Means he might have dispatch'd, and, according to their Desert, punish'd the two Traitors, who had officiously murther'd him; and why he spar'd *Mephibosheth* the Son of *Jonathan*, and *Micah* his Son, and *Micah's* four Sons, (whom in all Probability he liv'd to see) and in them (e) a long long Generation, all descended from *Saul's* Family, and all related to the Crown.

HAD this Affair of the *Gibeonites* happen'd indeed about the Beginning of *David's* Reign over all *Israel*, soon after the Death of *Ishbosheth*, and when he had Reason to apprehend, that some other Rival might, perchance, spring up in his Stead; there might then be some Umbrage to think, that the Branches of *Saul's* Family were to be cut off for *Reasons of State*, and to make his Possession of the Crown more safe: But, since these Things came to pass very near the Conclusion of his Reign, when (as he himself acknowledges (f) in the very next Chapter) God had not only covered him with the Shield of his Salvation, and so enlarged his Steps under him, that his Feet could not slip, but given him likewise the Necks of his Enemies, and made him the Head over many strange Nations; he could have no just Conception of Danger from any Quarter, and consequently, no Necessity to establish his Throne by Blood.

IT could not be then for any private End, that *David* deliver'd these Children of *Saul* into the Hands of the *Gibeonites*, but purely in Obedience to the Will of God, who had both directed, and warranted

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

(a) 2 Sam. xxi. 5.  
of King David, Vol. III.

(b) Ibid. ix. 1.

(c) Vid. 1 Chron. viii. 33, &c.

(d) Ibid. xxi. 12, 13.

(e) The History of the Life

(f) 2 Sam. xxii. 36, &c.

But was com-  
pelled to deli-  
ver them.



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2981, &c.  
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1023, &c.

ranted him so to do. For we cannot but suppose, (as *Josephus* does) that, when *David* consulted the Oracle concerning the *Famine*, God inform'd him, not only for what Crime it was inflicted, but by what Means likewise it was to be remov'd: And therefore, being let into all this, he was not at Liberty to do what he pleas'd, but compell'd rather to give up the Children as so many *Victims*, notwithstanding his *Promise* and *Oath* to their Father; because a *superior* Power interpos'd, and, in so doing, cancell'd the *prior* Obligation.

His granting  
away Mephi-  
boseth's E-  
state accounted  
for.

HIS making a Grant of *Mephiboseth's* Estate to a vile Miscreant of a Servant, without giving his Master a fair Hearing, is another Exception, that is commonly made to the Justice of King *David's* Proceedings in this Period of Time. But how could *David* have Leisure to send for *Mephiboseth* from Mount *Olivet* to *Jerusalem*, and enquire into the Merits of the Cause depending between him and his Servant, when he was in so great an Hurry, and under Flight from the Arms of his rebel Son? Or how could he suppose that *Ziba* could have dar'd to have told him so notorious a Lye, when it might, in a short Time, be disprov'd? Every Circumstance, in short, on *Ziba's* Side, look'd well; but none on his Master's. To his Master, *David* had been extremely kind in restoring to him the forfeited Estate of his Grand-Father *Saul*, and in allowing him (g) to eat at his own Table, as one of the King's Sons; and now, at the general Rendezvous of his Friends, *David* might well have expected, that the Person, to whom he had extended so many Favours, should not have been so negligent of his Duty, as to absent himself, unless it had been upon some extraordinary Business: And therefore, when *Ziba* acquaints him with the Occasion of his Absence, tho' it was a mere Fiction, yet with *David* it might find a readier Credence, because at this Time he had Reason to mistrust every Body, and seeing his own

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Family disconcerted and broken, might think the Crown liable to fall to any new Claimant, that could pretend to the same Right of Succession, that *Mephiboseth* might.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

ON the contrary, every Thing appear'd bright and plausible on *Ziba's* Side. He, tho' but a Servant, came to join the King, and instead of adhering to his Master's pretended Schemes of Advancement, had express'd his Duty to his rightful Sovereign, in bringing him a considerable Present, enough to engage his good Opinion. The Story that he told of his Master likewise, tho' utterly false, was cunningly contriv'd, and fitly accommodated to the Nature of the Times: So that, in this Situation of Affairs, as wise a Man, as *David*, might have been induc'd to believe the whole to be true, and, upon the Presumption of its being so, might have proceeded to pass a Judgment of Forfeiture (as in most Eastern Countries every Crime against the State was always attended with such a Forfeiture) upon *Mephiboseth's* Estate, and to consign the Possession of it to another.

ALL therefore, that *David* can be blam'd for in this whole Transaction, is, an Error in Judgment, even when he was impos'd upon by the plausible Tale of a Sycophant, and had no Opportunity of coming at the Truth; but upon his Return to *Jerusalem*, when *Mephiboseth* appears before him, and pleads his own Cause, we find this the Decision of it:—(b) *Why speakest thou any more of thy Matters? I have said, thou and Ziba divide the Land:* Which Words must not be so understood, as if he appointed, at that Time, an equal Division of the Estate, between *Mephiboseth* and his Servant, (for where would the Justice of such a Sentence be?) but rather, that he revok'd the Order he had given to *Ziba*, upon the suppos'd Forfeiture of his Master, and put Things now upon the same Establishment they were at first. (i) *I have said*, i. e. “My first Grant shall stand, when I decreed, that *Mephiboseth* should be Lord of the whole

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(g) 2 Sam. ix. 11.

(b) Ibid. xix. 29.

(i) Selden, de Successionibus 25.



A. M.  
2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

“ whole Estate, and Ziba his Steward to manage it for him.”

THE Words of the Grant are these,—

(k) *Then the King called to Ziba Saul's Servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy Master's Son, all that pertained to Saul and to all his House. Thou therefore, and thy Sons, and thy Servants, shall till the Land for him, and thou shalt bring in the Fruits, that thy Master's Son may have Food to eat, i. e. may be enabled to maintain himself and Family in Plenty; but Mephibosheth thy Master's Son, shall eat Bread alway at my Table.* From whence it seems manifest, that this Ziba had been an old Steward in Saul's Family, and had manag'd his private Estate, which lay at Gibeah of Benjamin. (l) This Estate upon one Account or other, had come into David's Possession, either in Right of his Wife, upon the Death of Saul's Son, or by Forfeiture to the Crown, upon Ishbosheth's Rebellion; but he, being willing now to do a generous Act to Saul's Family, in Memory of his Friendship to Jonathan, pass'd a free Grant or Dedition of it to his Son, and (that he might make a Provision for all his Dependents at once) put Ziba into the same Place he had enjoy'd before, constituting him † Steward of the royal Manour of Gibeah, even as he had been in the Life of Saul. So that David's Sentence or Determination, (m) *thou and Ziba divide the Land*, refers us to this original Grant, and consequently implies, no more, than that all Things should be in the same Situation, they were in before; viz. That Ziba, and his Sons should manage the Estate, and support themselves out of it, as usual, and that the Remainder of the Profits, which accru'd from thence, they should bring to Mephibosheth, for him to dispose of as he pleas'd; and to this Sense of the Words the following Reply seems to be accommodated, *yea*

*let him have all, viz: to his own Use and Property, since my Lord the King is come again in Peace.*

THAT, which leads many into a Misconception of David, as if he left the World in a vindictive and unforgiving Temper, (because we find him giving his Son some Instructions concerning two Persons, who had grossly mis-behav'd towards him) has been nothing else, but the Want of distinguishing between the same Person, when acting or advising in a publick, and when in a private Capacity. Shimei curses David in the Time of his Troubles; and yet David forgives him, and promises he shall not die. Joab does many valourous and brave Acts for the Honour of his King, and the Enlargement of his Dominions, but then he sullies all with his insolent Behaviour, and barbarous Murthers. They both had committed Crimes enough to forfeit their Lives; David however, for Reasons of State, thought it not adviseable to seize either of them for the present, but directed his Son, if ever they should give him a sufficient Provocation, not to spare them. “ *Thou hast Shimei with thee, (n)* “ and some Share perhaps he may have “ in thy Favour; but trust him not, he “ is no Friend to Kings, or kingly Power. “ Remember what he did to me in my “ Distress; how bitterly, how virulently “ he curs'd me to my Face; and I make “ no Doubt, but that he would be the “ same to thee in the like Circumstances. “ I forgave him in my Exile, because I “ look'd upon him, as an Instrument in “ God's Hands to humble me for my great “ Offence. I forgave him in my Return “ home, because he came to me when my “ Heart was open, and unwilling to damp “ the Joy of my Restoration with the Effusion of any Blood. I promis'd him “ his Life; and let not that Promise be violated

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

His Conduct towards Shimei and Joab vindicated.

(k) 2 Sam. ix. 10, 11.

(l) Pool's Annotations in Locum.

† The ancient Way of Tenancy (nor is it yet quite diffus'd) was that of occupying the Land, and giving the Proprietor a certain annual Portion of the Fruits of it. When the Tenant paid one Half of the annual Produce, he was called *Colonus Partiarus*; and such, in the Judgment of the best Criticks, was Ziba to Mephibosheth, as he had been before to Saul. The History of the Life of King David, Vol. III.

(m) 2 Sam. xix. 29, 30.

(n) Patrick's Commentary, on 2 Kings ii. 8.



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2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

“ violated in my Days : But what I did is  
“ no rule or Obligation to thee. Let him  
“ not die however for his Offence against  
“ me, but rather watch his Conduct, and,  
“ if he should chance to give thee a  
“ fresh Occasion, be sure to lay hold of it,  
“ because it is not in his Nature to be a  
“ good Subject.

“ THOU rememberest likewise, what  
“ Joab did unto me ; with what Inso-  
“ lence he treated me in the Time of the  
“ War against Absalom ; how, contrary to  
“ my Orders, he slew him, and after-  
“ wards talk’d to me in a menacing and  
“ imperious Manner. Thou rememberest  
“ what he did to Amasa, whom I intend-  
“ ed to have put in his Place, and made  
“ the General of all my Forces ; and what  
“ to Abner, who was then endeavouring  
“ to gain over to my Party all that ad-  
“ her’d to the House of Saul. The In-  
“ jury done to these two brave Men re-  
“ dounds upon me, since they were both  
“ under my Protection, and both mur-  
“ der’d, basely murder’d, because I had  
“ an Esteem for them ; and till Justice  
“ be done to their Murderer, (which I  
“ in my Life-time had not Power to  
“ do) (o) *their innocent Blood will not*  
“ *depart from my House.* Do thou  
“ therefore take Care to assail it, and  
“ whenever he commits any Transgression  
“ against thee, let the Blood of these two  
“ valuable Men be charg’d to his Account,  
“ and let him, as he has long deserv’d, be  
“ put to death.”

THIS is the Sense of David’s Words to his Son concerning these two Men ; and it is easy to observe, that, in these dying Instructions of his, (p) he is not to be consider’d as a *private Man*, acting upon Principles of Resentment, but as a King and Governor, giving Advice to his Son and Successor in Affairs of State. It was for the publick Good, that such Offenders, as *Shimei* and *Joab*, should suffer at a proper Time, and as Prudence should direct : And therefore, since his

Promise and Oath to one of them, and the formidable Power and Interest, which the other had usurp’d, restrain’d him, in his Life-time, from punishing them as they deserv’d ; and since it would have been an unjust Thing in itself, and a Derogation to the Glory of his Reign, to suffer such publick and crying Sins to go unpunish’d ; he recommended the Consideration of these Things to his Son, and, (q) like a wise *Magistrate*, laid a Scheme for the Punishment of Wick- edness, without Regard to any private Revenge.

DAVID, as we said, durst not call *Joab* to an Account, because his Power and Interest was so great in the Army, (and ’twas the Army, that *David*, in a great Measure, depended on) that it might have occasion’d an Alteration in the Government, had he pretended to do it : But, when *Solomon* came to the Throne, *Joab* was not that mighty Man he had formerly been. He was at least of an equal Age with *David* ; had command- ed the Armies of *Israel* for twenty Years, and upwards ; and, as he was only formidable at the Head of his Troops, and in the Times of War and publick Dis- order ; so (r) the profound Peace, which had subsisted for some Time, both before, and after the Beginning of *Solomon*’s Reign, had impair’d his Power, and made him in a Manner *useless*. Upon this Account, *Solomon* had not the like Reason to fear him, that his Father had ; nor did he lie under the like Obligations to spare him. He had done *David* great Services indeed, and a sufficient Recompence it was, that he had been indulg’d, for so many Years, with an Impunity for his Crimes ; but, whatever the Father might be, the Son was under no Ties or Obligations, es- pecially, when he found him conspiring to take away his Kingdom, and translate it to another.

WHEREIN the Formality of *David*’s Sin in numbering the People (which, at first

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 King  
viii.

Why he left  
Solomon to  
punish them.

(o) 1 Kings ii. 31.  
mentaries, on 1 Kings ii.

(p) Scripture vindicated, Part ii. p. 106.  
(q) Calmet’s Commentary.

(r) Calmet’s and Le Clerc’s Com.



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2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

first View, seems not to be so very heinous) did consist, it is not so well agreed among Interpreters. (t) *When thou takest the Number of the Children of Israel, says God to Moses, after their Number, then shall they give every Man a Ransom for his Soul unto the Lord, that there be no Plague among them, when thou numberest them:* Upon which Passage *Josephus*, and some others, have founded this Conjecture;—That *David* had quite forgot to demand of every Man, that was muster'd, an *half Shekel*, which was appointed by the Law, and is here called a *Ransom for his Soul*, and therefore God sent among the People a Pestilence; because, amidst the great Plenty and Abundance, which they now enjoy'd, it was a very impious and provoking Thing not to pay him his *Dues*. (u) But where do we find, that upon every Numbering of the People, an *half Shekel* was order'd to be paid? 'Twas in this Case only, when the People were to contribute towards the Building of the Tabernacle, and God threatens those that should refuse to do it; but this has no Manner of Relation to what *David* did, who no where stands charg'd with such an Omission, (x) any more, than with a Design of raising a *Capitation-Tax* (as others conceive) upon every *Poll* through the Kingdom.

OTHERS are of Opinion, that this Numbering of the People was a Thing contrary to the fundamental Promise, which God made *Abraham*, viz. that his Seed should so encrease, as even to exceed the Stars in Multitude; and therefore, since God had promis'd to increase them beyond Number, it savour'd of Infidelity and Distrust in God, for any one to go about to number them: But, quite contrary to this, the Scripture, in another Place, tells us, that *David* (out of a religious Regard to the Promise of God) never intended to take an exact Number of all, but of such only as were fit to bear Arms; for so the Words are, (y) *He took not the*

*Number of them, from twenty Years old and under, because the Lord had said, he would increase Israel, like to the Stars of the Heavens.* From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

THE most common therefore, and indeed the only probable Opinion is, that this Act of *David's* proceeded (z) from Pride and Ambition, and a foolish Curiosity to know the Number of his Subjects, the Strength of his Forces, and the Extent of his Empire: As if all these had greatly contributed to his Glory and Renown; as if they had been of his own acquiring, and more proper to place his Confidence in, than the Power and Assistance of him, whose Protection he had so long experienc'd; whom, upon other Occasions, he was wont to call *his Rock, his Shield, and Castle of Defence*; and who was able, at all Times, to save with a *Handful* of Men, as well as a *Multitude*.

PRIDE then, and an arrogant Conceit of himself, (which is always attended with a *Forgetfulness* of God) was at the Bottom of *David's* numbering the People; and indeed so visible to others, as well as to the All-seeing Eye of God, that we find *Joab* (who was then of his *Privy-Council*) thus remonstrating against it: (a) *Now the Lord thy God add unto thy People (how many soever they be) an hundred Fold, and that the Eyes of my Lord the King may see it; but why doth my Lord the King delight in this Thing?*

IT is a judicious Observation of the Apostle, (b) *Let no Man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot tempt with Evil, neither tempteth he any Man: But every Man is tempted, when he is drawn away with his own Lust, and enticed; and therefore it may justly be reckon'd a peculiar Elegance in the Hebrew Tongue, that it frequently leaves out the Nominative Noun to a Verb Active, which when it happens, the Accusative following supplies the Place of the*

(t) Exod. xxx. 12.  
xxvii. 23, 24.

(u) Calmet's Commentary in Locum.  
(v) Calmet's Commentary in Locum.

(w) Patrick in Locum.  
(a) 2 Sam. xxiv. 3.

(y) 1 Chron.  
(b) James i. 13, 14.



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2981, &c.  
Anc. Christ.  
1023, &c.

the *Nominative*, that is wanting. This shews, that our *Translators* have made a gross Mistake in rendering the Passage, *the Lord moved David to number Israel and Judah*, because in the Original there is no such Thing as *the Lord*; for the *Nominative* is omitted, as I said, and the *Accusative*, supplying its Place, makes the Sense simply *David was moved* (by what is not nam'd, but by his Pride and Vanity, we may say, as well as (c) the Instigations of the Devil) to *number the People*. So that there is no Contradiction in the Scripture-Account of this Transaction, no Appearance of a Confederacy between *God* and *Satan*; nor was God any farther concern'd in it, than as his Providence, for wise Ends, thought proper to permit it.

Why God sent  
this Pestilence  
upon the Peo-  
ple.

“ BUT, if *David* only was culpable in  
“ this Affair, why did not God immedi-  
“ ately punish him for it, instead of falling  
“ upon the People, who were confessedly  
“ innocent ?”

THE *Generality* perhaps were innocent, as to the Affair of numbering the People: That might be chiefly *David's* Sin; but, in other Respects, they were not. They had many great and grievous Sins, which justly deserv'd Punishment, and for which probably they would have been punish'd before, had it not been for God's Tender-ness to *David*, who must have been a Sufferer in the common Calamity; but now, when both King and People had deserv'd Correction, God was pleas'd to let loose his Anger upon both. *David*, indeed, was not smitten in *Person*, but a King is never more sensibly punish'd, than when the Judgment of God falls upon his People, and diminishes their Number, and their Strength. For the Body *politick* is not unlike the Body *natural*; no sooner does the Head suffer, but all the Members suffer with it; nor can the least

Part of the Body be in Pain, but the Head is immediately affected: And therefore we need not doubt, but that *David*, when he saw (d) the *Angel stretching out his Hand upon Jerusalem, to destroy it*, and thereupon broke out into this Exclamation, *Let thy Hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my Father's House*, had his Heart as full of Grief and Anxiety as any one, that lay languishing in the Plague.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

THUS, in all the Afflictions of his People, *David* was afflicted: And, if this fore Judgment befel the Nation a little while before *Abjalom's* Rebellion, (as some have suspected a *Mis-location* in this Part of the History) this may suggest a Reason, why God might think fit to preserve *David*, and not cut him off, as he deserv'd, for his Sin; (e) that the Dissention, which might have arose among his Sons, about the Right of Succession in Case of his Death, and the *foreign* and *domestick* Wars, that would thereupon have ensu'd, and \* prov'd more fatal to the *Israelites*, than this destroying *Pestilence*, might, by *David's* Life, and Interposition, be prevented. And from the Sense of this, very probably it is, that we find him commemorating his Deliverance from this publick Calamity in such exalted Strains, as make it disputable, whether their *Piety* or *Poetry* are more remarkable. (f) *He that dwelleth in the secret Place of the most High, shall abide under the Shadow of the Almighty. He shall deliver thee from the Snare of the Fowler, and from the noisome Pestilence. Thou shalt not be afraid for the Terror by Night, nor for the Arrow that flieth by Day, nor for the Pestilence that walketh in Darkness, or for the Destruction that wasteth at Noon-Day. A Thousand shall fall at thy Side, and ten Thousand at thy Right-Hand, but it shall not come nigh thee.*

And not on  
David.

9 Y

IT

(c) 1 Chron. xxi. 1

(d) 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17.

(e) *Le Clerc's* Commentary in Locum.

\* The Character, which *Livy* gives us of such Factions and Dissentions is conceiv'd in these Words: — *Fuere, eruntque pluribus populi magis exitio, quam bella externa, quam fames, morbove, quæque alia in numinis iras, velut ultima publicorum malorum, vertunt, Lib. iv.*

(f) Psal. xci. 1, &c.



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2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

The Difference  
in the Book of  
Samuel, and  
that of Chro-  
nicles recon-  
ciled.

IT must be own'd indeed, that there is a very large Difference, in the Scripture-Accounts of the Number of Men, fit to bear Arms, that were found in *David's* Dominions: (g) In *Samuel* it is said, that they were in *Israel* eight hundred Thousand, and in *Judah* five hundred Thousand; but in (h) *Chronicles*, they of *Israel* were a Thousand thousand, and an Hundred thousand, and they of *Judah* four hundred threescore and ten Thousand: And various have been the Attempts to adjust and settle this Disagreement. Some suppose, that, as *Joab* undertook this Office with no small Reluctancy, and *David*, very probably, might repent of the Thing, before it was fully executed, tho' the Commissioners might make an exact Review, (i) yet they thought proper to lay before the King no more than what the Sum in *Samuel* amounts to; but that the Author of the Book of *Chronicles* might, from some of these Commissioners, receive the compleat Sum, which occasion'd the Difference.

(k) OTHERS imagine, that this Difference arises from the *Legionary Soldiers*, (as they are called) or those Companies of *Militia*, which attended the King's Person by Turns, and might make the Number either greater, or less, according as they were number'd, or not number'd, in the Account: But this Solution is purely arbitrary, and such as has no Foundation in Scripture. It supposes withal, that the real Number was what is recorded in *Chronicles*, which taken in the several Articles, that are said to be omitted, surpasses all Faith.

SINCE there is then no Possibility of reconciling these different Computations, the Question is, Which of the two we are to receive: And this, without all Controversy, must be that in *Samuel*, not only because the *Arabick* Translators, in their Version of the *Chronicles*, have inserted it, but because there is nothing

excessive, or extravagant in the Supposition, that, in a fertile and well-cultivated Country of sixty Leagues in Length, and thirty in Breadth, a Multitude of People, to the Number of six or seven Millions, (which, taking in the other Articles, will be the Sum total) might very comfortably be maintain'd. (l) Rather then, than have Recourse to such Solutions, as do but more embarrass the Matter, we may adventure to say, without any Diminution to the Scripture's Authority, that the excessive Number in the *Chronicles* was a Mistake of the Person, who, after the Captivity, transcrib'd this Part of the sacred Writ; *Nam non dubito* (says *Sulpicius*, (m) in his *Sacred History*) *Librariorum potius negligentia, præsertim tot jam sæculis intercedentibus, veritatem fuisse corruptam, quàm ut Propheta erraverit.*

IT must be acknowledg'd, that in most Nations, where the regal Power was at this Time establish'd, the Right of Succession was generally hereditary, and the eldest Son seldom (except in Cases of Incapacity) postpon'd. This is what *Adonijah* urges to *Bathsheba*; (n) *Thou knowest, that the Kingdom was mine* by Right of Primogeniture, and that all *Israel* set their Faces on me, that I should reign: But then, there was this peculiar to the Jewish Constitution, that, as God had been their only King from the Time that they first became a Nation, so, when they thought fit to have that Form of Government alter'd, he still reserv'd to himself the Right of nominating the Successor, when the Throne became vacant: (o) *When thou art come unto the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt say, I will set a King over me, like all the Nations, that are about me, thou shalt by all Means make him King over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose.* So that, when God had declar'd his Pleasure concerning the Person, that was to succeed him, (as he did

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

Why David  
made Solomon  
his Successor.

(g) 2 Sam. xxiv. 9.  
Commentary on 2 Sam. xxiv. 9.  
ii. 15.

(h) 1 Chron. xxi. 5.

(l) Le Clerc's Commentary in Locum.

(o) Deut. xvii. 14, 15.

(i) Ibid. xxvii. 24.

(m) Lib. i.

(k) Vide Calaneo

(n) 1 Kings



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did by the Prophet *Nathan*) *David* was not at Liberty to make Choice of any other.

WE do not dispute at all, but that *Bathsheba*, who was his favourite Wife, had a great Ascendancy over her Husband; but *Solomon's* Title was not founded upon her Interest and Management with the King, but upon the Ordination and Appointment of God. (p) *Of all my Sons*, says *David*, (*for the Lord hath given me many Sons*) *he hath chosen Solomon my Son to sit upon the Throne of the Kingdom of the Lord over Israel*; and therefore *Adonijah* himself acknowledges, (q) *that it was of the Lord, that the Kingdom was turned about, and become his Brother's*.

NATHAN indeed puts *Bathsheba* upon another Argument, viz. the Sacredness of the King's Oath, in order to prevail with him in Behalf of her Son: (r) *Didst not thou swear unto thy Handmaid, saying assuredly Solomon thy Son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne?* But at what Time this Promise was made, is a Matter of some Dispute. The Generality of *Interpreters* are of Opinion, that, after the Death of the first Child, which *David* had by *Bathsheba*, he comforted her for her Loss, and gave her Assurance, that, if God should give him another Son by her, he would not fail to make him his Successor. But it is much more probable, that *David* did not make any Declaration of a Promise to *Bathsheba*, until God had reveal'd it to him, (s) that he should have a Son, distinct from what he had already, who should succeed him in the Kingdom, and have the Honour of building him a Temple; and, no sooner was *Solomon* born, but *David* was convinc'd that this was the Child to whom the Promises belong'd, by *Nathan's* being sent to give him a Name, denoting his being (t) *beloved of the Lord*: And 'twas at this Time, most

probably, that *David* gave his Mother a Promise, confirm'd upon Oath, that, since God had so manifestly declar'd in Favour of the Child, he, for his Part, would do his utmost to facilitate his Succession: But, upon the whole, he did not chuse for himself, (u) neither was his Declaration to *Bathsheba* previous to *Nathan's* Information, but rather the Effect, and Consequence of it.

BUT even suppose there had been no divine Interposition in Favour of *Solomon*, why might not *David*, who had done such signal Service in his Reign, nominate his Successor? (x) Several great Princes, in most Nations, have claim'd this Privilege. Among the *Romans*, *Aurelius* nam'd *Nerva*, and *Nerva* chose *Trajan*, and so did *Augustus* appoint his Successor. And, that this was a Prerogative belonging to the Crown of *Israel*, and what continu'd with it for some Time after *David*, is evident from the Story of his Grandson *Rehoboam*, (y) who, tho' a Prince of no great Merit, took upon him the Authority of nominating his Successor, and, to the Prejudice of his eldest Son, made one of his youngest King.

FAR are we from vindicating *Solomon* in all his Actions, any more than *David* in the Matter of *Uriah*. His Severity to his Brother, for a seemingly small Offence, look'd like *Revenge*, and as if he had taken the first Opportunity to cut him off, for his former Attempt upon the Kingdom: And yet we cannot but imagine, (z) from *Solomon's* Words to his Mother, *Why dost thou ask Abishag for Adonijah? Ask for him the Kingdom also, for he is mine elder Brother*; that there was some farther Conspiracy against him, (tho' not mention'd in holy Writ) whereof he had got Intelligence, and wherein *Joab* and *Abiathar* were engag'd; and that he look'd upon this asking *Abishag* in Marriage as the *Prelude* to it, and the first *Overt-Act*, as it were, of their Treason. It is certain, that they

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

That he had a Right to name one.

Why *Solomon* might take away *Adonijah's* Life.

(p) 1 Chron. xxviii. 5.

(q) 1 Kings ii. 15.

(r) 1 Kings i. 13

2 Sam. xii. 24.

(s) 1 Chron.

xxii. 9, 10.

(t) The Name was *Jedidiah*, 2 Sam. xii. 25.

(u) *Calmet's* Commentary in Locum.

(v) *Patrik's* Commentary on 1 Kings i. 20.

(y) 2 Chron. xi. 21, 22.

(z) 1 Kings ii. 22.



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2981, *Esc.*  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, *Esc.*

they thought to impose upon the King, as they had done upon his Mother, and carry their Point, without ever discovering the malevolent Intent of it.

THE Wives of the late King (according to the Customs of the *East*) belong'd to his Successor, and were never marry'd to any under a *crown'd* Head. (a) *Abisbag* was doubtless a beautiful Woman, and, by her near Relation to *David*, might have a powerful Interest at Court; *Adonijab* might therefore hope, by this Marriage to strengthen his Pretensions to the Crown, or, at least, to lay the Foundation for some future Attempt, upon a proper Opportunity, either if *Solomon* should die, and leave a young Son, not able to contest the Point with him, or if, at any Time, he should happen to fall under the People's Displeasure, as his Father had done before him.

THIS might be *Adonijab's* Design, and *Solomon*, accordingly, might have Information of it: But supposing that his Brother's Design was entirely innocent, yet, since his Request (according to the Customs then prevailing) was confessedly bold and presumptuous, and had in it all the Appearance of Treason, (b) it was none of *Solomon's* Business to make any farther Enquiry about it, or to interpret the Thing in his Brother's Favour. It was sufficient for him, that the Action was in itself *criminal*, and of dangerous Consequence to the State; for 'tis by their Actions, and not Intentions, that all Offenders must be tried.

*A D O N I J A H* indeed, had he liv'd under our *Constitution*, would have had a *fair* Hearing before *Conviction*: But we ought to remember, that, in the Kingdoms of the *East*, the Government was *absolute*, and the Power of Life or Death entirely in the Prince; so that *Solomon*, without the Formality of any Process, could pronounce his Brother dead: And, because he conceiv'd, that in Cases of this

Nature, Delays were dangerous, might send immediately, and have him dispatch'd; tho' we cannot but say, that it had been more to his Commendation, had he shew'd more *Clemency*, and spar'd his Life.

AND, in like Manner, had he not marry'd his *Egyptian* Queen, there might be less objected to his Character: For, whatever Augmentation of Power he might promise himself from that Alliance, (c) he certainly ran the Hazard of having his Religion corrupted by this unlawful Mixture. Others however have observ'd, that, as the sacred Scriptures commend the Beginning of *Solomon's* Reign, in all other Respects, except the (d) *People's* sacrificing in high Places, which might be the rather tolerated, *because there was no House built unto the Name of the Lord, in those Days*; and, as they give him this Character, (e) that *he loved the Lord, and walked in all the Statutes of David his Father*, he would never have done an Act so directly contrary to the Laws of God, as marrying an idolatrous Princess, had she not been first proselyted to the *Jewish* Faith. The Scripture indeed takes Notice of the Gods of the *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, and *Zidonians*, for whom *Solomon*, in Compliance to his *strange Wives*, built Places of Worship: But, as there is no Mention made of any Gods of the *Egyptians*, it seems very likely, that this Princess, when she was espous'd to *Solomon*, quitted the Religion of her *Ancestors*, to which these Words in the *Psalms*, suppos'd to be written upon this Occasion, (f) *Hearken, O my Daughter, forget thine own People, and thy Father's House, so shall the King have Pleasure in thy Beauty, for he is the Lord*, are thought by some to be no distant *Allusion*. However this be, it is certain, that we find *Solomon* no where reprov'd in Scripture for this *Match*; (g) nor can we think, that his Book of *Canticles* (which is suppos'd to be his *Epithalamium*) would have found

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

Marry an  
Egyptian  
Queen.

(a) *Pool's* Annotations on 1 Kings ii. 22.

(d) 1 Kings iii. 2.

1 Kings iii. 1.

(e) *Ibid.* ver. 3.

(b) *Calmet's* Commentary in Locum.

(f) *Psal.* xlv. 10, 11.

(c) *Vid.* 1 Kings xi.

(g) *Calmet's* Commentary on



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found a Place in the sacred *Canon*, had the *Spouse*, whom it all along celebrates, been at that Time an *Idolatress*; tho' there is Reason to believe, that she afterwards relaps'd into her antient Religion, and contributed, as much as any, to the King's Seduction, and the many great Disorders, that were in the latter Part of his Reign.

And degrade  
Abiathar.

How far the High-Priest, *Abiathar*, was concern'd in the Plot against *Solomon*, the sacred History does not particularly inform us; but such was the Reverence paid to the *sacerdotal* Character, that *Solomon* would have hardly dar'd to have depos'd such an one from his Office, had not the *Constitution* of the Nation authoriz'd him so to do. The Kings in the *East* indeed soon found out Ways to make themselves *absolute*; but it looks, as if, at the first Establishment, the King was at the Head of the *Hebrew* Republick, and the High-Priest his Subject, and, in all Civil Affairs, submitted to his Correction; (b) infomuch, that when any one abus'd the Power of his Office to the Prejudice of the Commonweal, or endangering the King's Person, the King might justly deprive him of his Honours and Titles, of his *Temporalities* and Emoluments, and even of Life itself. And therefore, when *Abiathar*, by his Conspiracy, had merited all this, whatever was dependent on the Crown, (as all the Revenues of this Place, as well as the Liberty of officiating in it were dependent) *Solomon* might lawfully take from him; but the *sacerdotal* Character, which he receiv'd from God, and to which he was anointed, this he could not alienate: And therefore we may observe, that after his *Deprivation*, and even when *Zadok* was in Possession of his Place, he is nevertheless still mention'd (i) under the Stile and Title of the *Priest*.

THE Truth is, there is a great deal of Difference between depriving a Man of the *Dignity*, and of the *Exercise* of his *Function* in such a determinate Place; and

between taking from him an *Authority*, that was given him by God, and the *Profits* and Emoluments arising from it, which were originally the Gift of the Crown. The former of these *Solomon* could not do, and the latter it is probable he was the rather incited to do, out of Regard to the *Prophecy* of *Samuel*, wherein he foretold *Eli*, (from whom *Abiathar* was descended) that he would translate the Priesthood from his to another Family, as he did in the Person of *Zadok*, who was of the House of *Eleazar*, even as *Eli* was of that of *Ithamar*; so that, by this Means, the Priesthood reverted to its antient Channel.

IN the Account which we have of *Solomon's* sumptuous Manner of Living, (k) we read in the Book of *Kings*, that he had *forty Thousand Stalls of Horses for his Chariots*; (l) but in that of *Chronicles* it is said, that he had no more than *four*; and yet, in *this* some will acknowledge no Disagreement at all. The Author of *Samuel*, say they, speaks of the *Horses*, the Author of the *Chronicles*, of the *Stalls* or *Stables*, which, supposing every one to contain *ten* Horses, answer the Number exactly. It is observable however, that the History makes Mention (m) of *Chariot-Cities*, i. e. Cities, wherein *Solomon* kept Chariots and Horsemen in several Parts of his Kingdom, for the Security of his Government, and the Suppression of any Disorder, that might happen to arise; and therefore others have thought, that, in the *Chronicles*, the Author speaks of those *Stalls*, which *Solomon* had at *Jerusalem* for his constant *Life-Guard*, and were no more than *four Thousand*; but in *Kings*, of all those *Stalls*, which were dispers'd, up and down, in the several Parts of his Kingdom, which might be *forty Thousand*: Because, upon the Account of the Conquests, which his Father had made on the *East Side of Jordan*, it was necessary for *Solomon* to have a stronger Armament of this Kind, than other Kings before him had, in order to keep the People, that

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

The different  
Accounts in  
Kings and  
Chronicles  
reconciled.

(b) Calmet's Commentary on 1 Kings ii. 27.  
15. 25.

(m) Ibid.

(i) 1 Kings iv. 4.

(k) Ibid. ver. 26.

(l) 2 Chron.



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1023, &c.

would otherwise be apt to rebel, in due Subjection.

BUT, without any Prejudice to the *Authority* of the Scriptures, why may we not own, that an Error has possibly crept into the Text through the Negligence of some Transcriber, who has inserted *Arbaim*, i. e. *forty*, instead of *Arbab*, *four*, and so made this large Disparity in the Number? *Four Thousand* Stalls (supposing each Stall for a single Horse) are moderate enough, but *forty Thousand* is incredible: And therefore (to proportion the Horses to the Chariots, (n) which were a *Thousand* and *four hundred*) we may suppose, (o) with the learned Author, from whom we have borrow'd this Conjecture, that, of these Chariots some were drawn with two, some with three, and some with four Horses. Now, if the Chariots were each drawn with a *Pair* only, the Number of *Solomon's* Chariot-horses must be *two Thousand eight hundred*; if by two *Pair*, then it must be, *five Thousand six hundred*; but the *Medium* between these two Numbers is very near *four Thousand*; and therefore it seems most likely, that the Horses, which the King kept for this Use only, might be much about this Number. Too many for the Law to tolerate, (p) but the King perhaps might have as little Regard to this Clause in the Law, as he had to the following one, which forbade him (q) *to multiply Wives and Concubines to himself, or greatly to multiply Silver or Gold*.

THE only remaining Difficulty (except the *divine Vision* vouchsaf'd *Solomon*, which has not been mention'd) is the great Quantity of Sacrifices, which he is said to have offer'd on one Altar only; but, without recurring to any Miracle for this, or without supposing, that this Fire, which originally came from Heaven, was more strong and intense, than any common Fire, and therefore, after the Return

from the Captivity, the Altar (as some observe) was made larger, because there wanted this celestial Flame: Without any forc'd Solution like this, we have no Reason to think, that all these Sacrifices were offer'd in one Day. The King, (we may imagine) upon one of the great *Festivals*, went in Procession with his Nobles, to pay his Devotion at *Gibeon*, where the Tabernacle was, and the brazen Altar, which *Moses* had made. Each of the great *Festivals*, lasted for seven Days; but *Solomon* might stay much longer at *Gibeon*, until, by the daily Oblations, a thousand Burnt-offerings were consum'd; and, at the Conclusion of this Course of Devotion, he might offer up his ardent Prayer to God for Wisdom, and God, for the Confirmation of his Faith, might appear to him in a Dream by Night, and have that Converse with him, which the Scripture takes notice of.

(r) SLEEP indeed is like a State of Death to the Soul, wherein the Senses are lock'd up, and the Understanding and Will depriv'd of the free Exercise of their Functions; and yet this is no Impediment to God in communicating himself to Mankind: For (s) *God speaketh once, yea twice* (says the Author of the Book of *Job*) *in a Dream, in a Vision of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth upon Men, in Slumberings upon the Bed, then he openeth the Ears of Men, and sealeth their Instruction*: For God, no doubt, has Power, not only to awaken our intellectual Faculties, but to advance them above their ordinary Measure of Perception, even while the Body is asleep.

(t) A VERY eminent Father of the Greek Church, speaking of the different Kinds of Dreams, has justly observ'd, that the *Organs* of our Body, and our Brain, are not unlike the *Strings* of a *musical Instrument*. While the Strings are screw'd up to a proper Pitch, they give an harmonious Sound, if touch'd by a skilful Hand; but,

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

And his divine Vision,  
both probable.

Solomon's  
1000 Sacrifices on one  
Altar,

(n) 1 Kings x. 26.

(o) Vid. *Hochart* Hierof. P. I. lib. ii. c. 9.

(p) Deut. xvii. 16.

(q) *Le*

*Church Commentary* on 1 Kings iv. 26.

(r) *Calmet's Commentary* on 1 Kings iii.

(s) *Job* xxxiii. 14, &c.

(t) *Gregory*, de *Opificio Hominis*, c. 13.



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1023, &c.

but, as soon as they are relax'd, they give none at all. In like Manner, while we are awake, (*says he*) our Senses, touch'd and directed by our Understanding, make an agreeable Concert; but when once we are asleep, the Instrument has done founding, unless it be, that the Remembrance of what pass'd, when we are awake, comes and presents itself to the Mind, and so forms a *Dream*, just as the Strings of an Instrument will for some Time continue their Sound, even after the Hand of the Artift has left them. It is no hard Matter to apply this to *Solomon's Dream*. He had pray'd the Day before with great Fervency, and desir'd of God the Gift of Wisdom. In the Night-time God appear'd to him in a Dream, and bid him ask whatever he would. *Solomon*, having his Mind still full of the Desire of Wisdom, ask'd it, and obtain'd it: So that the Prayer, or Desire, which he utter'd in his Dream, was but the Consequence of the *Option*, he had made the Day before, when he was awake.

IN a Word, tho' we should allow, that the Soul of Man, when the Body is asleep, is in a State of Rest and *Inactivity*; yet we cannot but think, that God can approach it many different Ways; can move and actuate it, just as he pleases; and, when he is minded to make a Discovery of any Thing, can set such a lively Representation of it before the Eyes of the Man's Understanding, as shall make him not doubt of the *Reality* of the *Vision*.

At his Building of the Temple was commendable.

*S O L O M O N* indeed, at the Consecration of the Temple, owns, that (*u*) *the Heaven of Heavens could not contain God, and much less then the House, that he had built him*; but it will not therefore follow, that there is no Necessity for Places appropriated to divine Worship, nor any Occasion for making them so magnificent and *sumptuous*. That God, who is the Author and Giver of our Being, and to whom we are indebted for every Thing we have, and every Thing we

hope for, should be constantly attended with the Homage and Adoration, with the Praises and Acknowledgments of his Creatures (his own *dependent* Creatures) is a *Position*, that will admit of no Controversy; and that there should be some Places appointed for this Purpose; that all the Offices of Religion may be perform'd with more Decency, and more Solemnity, is another *Position*, that seems to arise from the Nature of the Thing. These Buildings we stile the *Houses of God*; but it is not to defend him (as *Arnobius* (*x*) speaks) from Heat or Cold, from Wind or Rain, or Tempests, that we raise such Structures; but to put ourselves in a Capacity of paying our Duty to him, and of nourishing in our Hearts such Sentiments of Respect and Reverence, of Love and Gratitude, as are due from Creatures to their great Creator.

IN these Places, God is said to be more immediately present, to hear our Supplications, receive our Praises, and relieve our Wants; and therefore, to make his Habitation commodious, *David* exhorts his Subjects to a liberal *Contribution*, and, *Because I have a Joy*, says he, *in the House of my God, I have, of mine own Gold and Silver, given three Thousand Talents of Gold, even the Gold of Ophir, and seven Thousand Talents of fine Silver*. "He indeed makes mention (as "the learned (*y*) *Hooker*, with whose "Words I conclude this Argument, has "observ'd) of the natural Conveniency, "that such Kind of bounteous Expenses have, since thereby we not only "testify our chearful Affection to God, "which thinks nothing too dear to be "bestow'd about the Furniture of his "Service; but give Testimony to the "World likewise of his *Almightiness*, "whom we outwardly honour with the "chiefest of outward Things, as being, "of all Things, himself incomparably "the greatest. To set forth the Majesty "of Kings, his *Viceregents* here below, "the most gorgeous and rare Treasures, "that

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

(u) 1 Kings viii. 27.

(x) Contra Gent. lib. vi.

(y) Eccles. Polity. lib. v.



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2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

“ that the World can afford, are procur'd ;  
“ and can we suppose, that God will be  
“ pleas'd to accept what the meanest of  
“ these would disdain ? In a Word, tho'  
“ the true Worship of God, says he, be  
“ to God in itself acceptable, who respects  
“ not so much, in what Place, as with  
“ what Affection he is serv'd ; yet mani-

fest it is, that the very Majesty and  
“ Holiness of the Place, where God is  
“ worshipp'd, hath, in Regard of us,  
“ great Virtue, Force, and Efficacy, as it  
“ is a sensible Help to stir up Devotion,  
“ and, in that Respect, bettereth, no  
“ doubt, our holiest and best Actions of  
“ that Kind.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

## DISSERTATION V.

### Of the antient Jerusalem, and its Temple.

Its Name, and  
Situation.

IT is an Opinion vulgarly receiv'd, and not without much Probability, that *Jerusalem* is the same City, which (z) elsewhere is called *Salem*, and whereof *Melchisedeck* is said to have been King. Not that *Salem*, or the City of *Melchisedeck* was of equal Extent with *Jerusalem* in After-Times ; but *Jerusalem* was no other, than the City of *Salem* enlarg'd and beautify'd by the Kings of all *Israel*, at first by *David* and *Solomon*, and, after that, by the succeeding Kings of *Judah*, when the Monarchy came to be divided into two distinct Kingdoms.

THE Word *Salem*, in the *Hebrew* Language, (a) signifies *Peace* : And, as the City of *Melchisedeck* called *Salem*, is probably thought to be the same with *Jerusalem* ; so is it certain, that *Jerusalem* was (b) otherwise called *Jebus*, and therefore, as it preserves the Name of *Salem* in the latter, so is it thought to preserve the Name of *Jebus* in the former Part of it, and to be nothing else, but a Compound of *Jebus* and *Salem*, which, for the better Sound's Sake, by the Change of one Let-

ter, and the Omission of another, is soften'd into *Jerusalem*.

WHETHER this City stood in the Center of the World, or no, we shall not pretend to determine, tho' some † very zealously contend for it ; since it is a Matter of more material Disquisition, in what Tribe it may be suppos'd to have been situated. In the Conquest of the Land of *Canaan*, and at the famous Battle of *Gibcon*, (c) *Joshua* put to Death the King of *Jerusalem*, and, very probably, took the City, tho', by some Means or other not mention'd in Scripture, the *Jebusites* afterwards got Possession, and continu'd their Possession even till the Days of *David*. In the Division of the Land, it was apparently one of those Cities, which (d) were given to the Tribe of *Benjamin* ; and yet, when we read that, at one Time, (e) the Children of *Judah*, could not drive out the *Jebusites*, and, at another, (f) that the Children of *Judah* took and burnt *Jerusalem*, one would be tempted to think, that it lay within the Limits of that Tribe : But then this Difference may be easily reconcil'd

(z) Gen. xiv. 18.

(a) Heb. vii. 2.

(b) Compare Josh. xv. 8. with 1 Chron. xi. 4.

† To this Purpose they observe, that the sacred Writers are very well acquainted with this, as appears by that Passage of *Ezekiel*, Chap. v. 5. Thus saith the Lord God, this is Jerusalem ; I have set it in the Midst of the Nations and Countries round about her. For what Purpose he did this, the Psalmist has not been wanting to inform us, Out of Sion, says he, the Perfection of Beauty, God hath shined, Psal. l. 2. Here the Almighty kept his Court, and from hence he sent out his Embassadors, the Prophets, to publish his Decrees to the whole World around him, with more Ease, and speedier Conveyance, than could possibly be done from any other Region of the habitable World. From hence, as from a central Point, the Light of the Law at first, and the Gospel afterwards, shone out to the surrounding Nations, and therefore we find *Jerusalem*, emphatically called the City of our God, the Mountain of his Holiness, beautiful for Situation, and the Joy of the whole Earth, Psal. xlviii. 1, 2. The History of the Life of King David, Vol. II.

(c) Josh. x. 23, 40. and xii. 10.

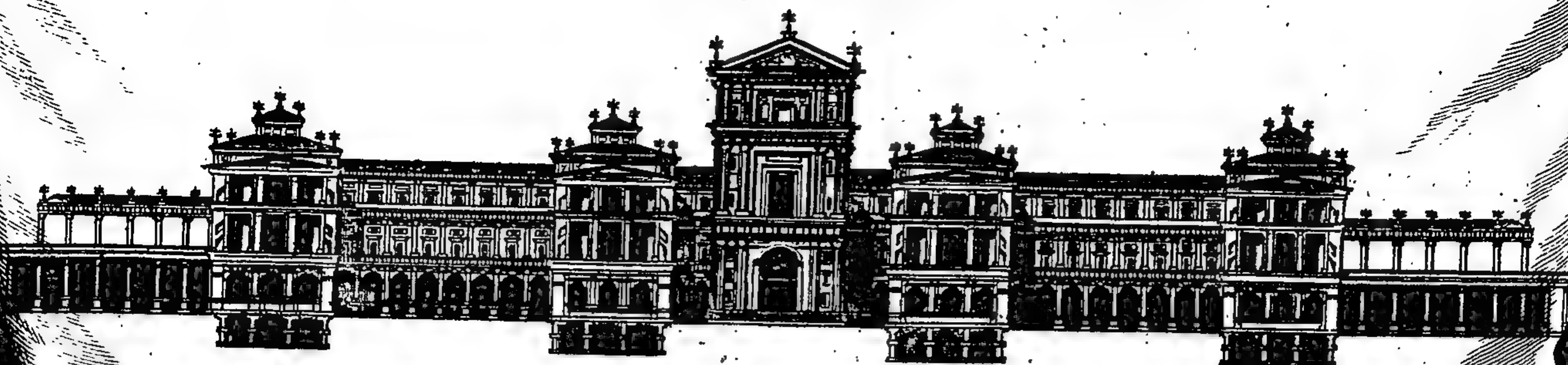
(d) Josh. xviii. 28.

(e) Josh. xv. 63.

(f) Judg. i. 2.



THE EAST PROSPECT OF THE TEMPLE, AND ITS INNER COURTS.



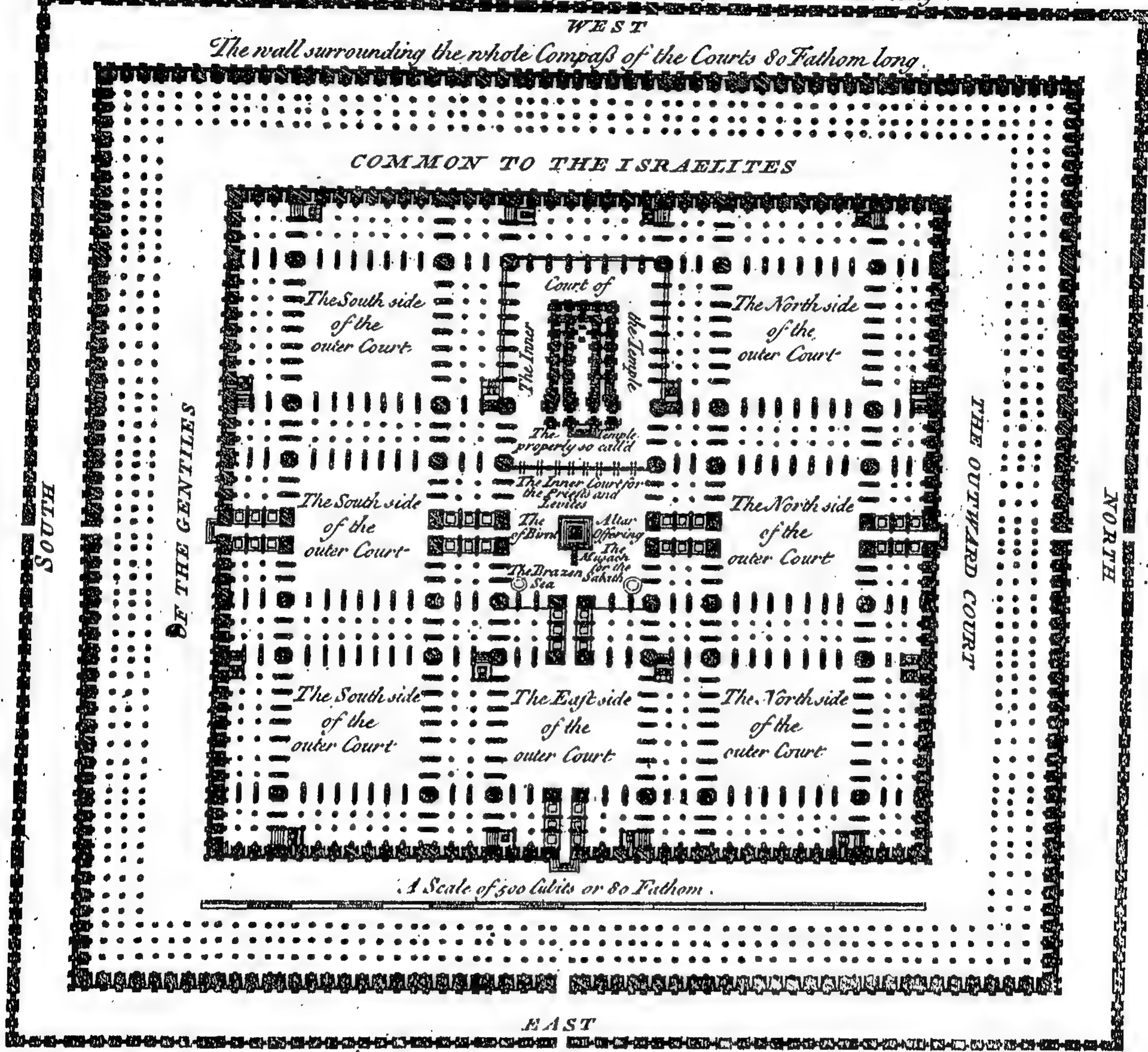
THE GROUND PLOT OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

The wall surrounding the whole Compass of the Temple 120 Fathom long.

WEST

The wall surrounding the whole Compass of the Courts 80 Fathom long.

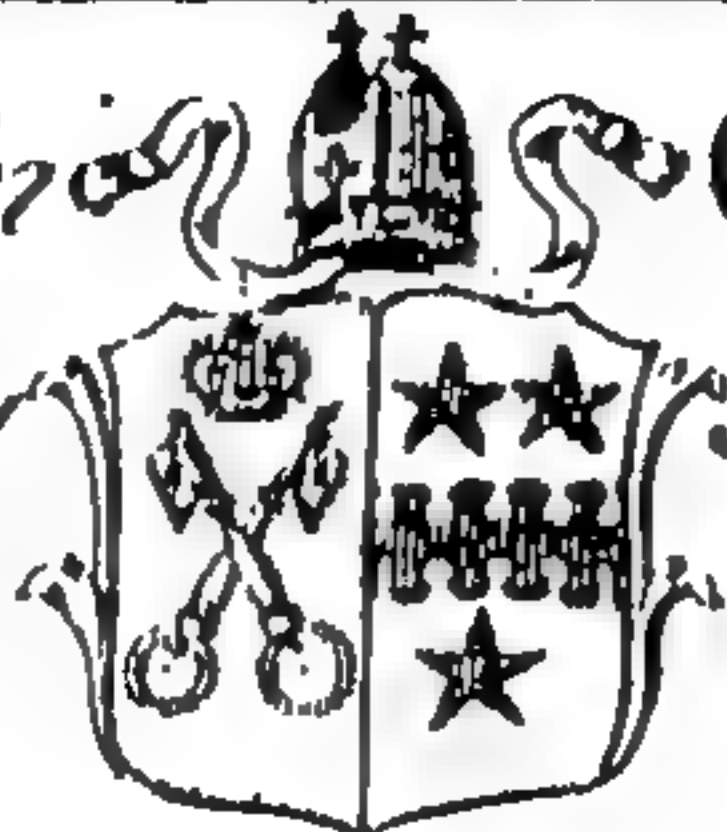
COMMON TO THE ISRAELITES



A Scale of 500 Cubits or 80 Fathom.

EAST

To the most Reverend Father in God LANCELOT L<sup>d</sup>. Archbishop of YORK this Plate is most humbly Inscribed by his Lordship's most dutypfull Son and Servant Tho<sup>s</sup> Stackhouse.



J. Mynde sc.



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reconcil'd, if we will but consider, that, as this City was built on the *Frontiers* of both Tribes, it is sometimes made a Part of the one, and sometimes of the other; that, by *Joshua's* Division of the Country, *Benjamin* had most Right to it, but, by the Right of Conquest, *Judah*; however, when it came to be made the *Metropolis* of the whole Nation, it was thought to belong to the *Israelites* in common, and therefore was claimed by *neither*.

THE City of *Jerusalem* was built upon two Hills, and encompass'd all round with Mountains. It was situated in a barren and stony Soil; but the Places adjacent were well water'd, having the Fountains of *Gion* and *Siloam*; and the Brook *Kidron* at the Foot of its Walls. *Jebus*, or the antient City, which *David* took, was seated on a Hill towards the *South*; and, on the opposite Quarter, towards the *North*, was Mount *Sion*, where *David* built a new † City, and called it after his own Name, and where stood his royal Palace likewise †, and the Temple of the Lord; for the Temple was built upon Mount *Moriab*, which was one of the Hills belonging to Mount *Sion*.

BETWEEN these two Mountains lay the Valley of *Millo*, which formerly separated antient *Jebus* from the City of *David*, but was afterwards filled up by *David* and *Solomon*, to make a Communication between the two Cities: But besides this Valley of *Millo*, we read in Scripture

of (g) *the House of Millo*, which is said to be (b) *in the City of David*, and therefore was built either on Mount *Sion*, or some adjacent Place. Let us then enquire a little what this *House of Millo* might possibly be.

*M I L L O*, consider'd in its *Etymology*, is thought to be deduc'd from a *Root*, which signifies *to be full*, and is therefore, in the sacred History, suppos'd to denote a large capacious Place, design'd for publick Meetings, or, in short, a *Senate-House*. That this was some publick Edifice, I think may be inferr'd from the Notices that is taken of it among some other of *Solomon's* publick Buildings, where the Reason of the Tax, which he levy'd upon his Subjects, is said to be this, — (i) *That he might build the House of the Lord, and his own House, and Millo, and the Walls of Jerusalem; &c.* for, since we find it join'd with the *House of the Lord*, and the *Walls of Jerusalem*. we cannot but suppose, that it was a Building of the same publick Nature; and since we find farther, that (k) *the Servants of King Joash arose, and made a Conspiracy, and slew him in the House of Millo*, very probably when he was come thither to debate, and consult with his Princes, and other chief Men, the Thing seems to be incontestable, that this *House of Millo* was erected for a publick *Senate-House*; tho' there is some Reason to imagine, that it was employ'd likewise for other Purposes.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

Its Buildings:

I N

† This City was of a circular Form, situate on a much higher Hill, and surrounded with a broad, deep Trench, hewn (whether by Art, or Nature) out of a natural Rock. This Trench was defended by a Wall of great Strength, erected upon its inner Edge, and this Wall was, in like Manner, defended and beautify'd with strong and square Towers, at regular Distances; which Towers are said to have been built of white Marble, the lowest 60, and the highest 120 Cubits high, but all exactly of one Level on the Top, altho' in themselves of very different Heights, according to the Declivity of the Ground, on which they stood. The History of the Life of King *David*, Vol. II.

† The Tower, which went under the Name of *David*, was situate upon the utmost Angle of Mount *Sion*, and the Beauty and fine Proportion of this Fabrick, as well as the Use that was made of it, may be fairly inferr'd from that famous Comparison of *Solomon's*: *Thy Neck is like the Tower of David, built for an Armoury, whereon there hang a Thousand Bucklers, all Shields of mighty Men*, Cant. iv. 4. The Tower of *Furnaces*, which probably had it's Name from the many Fires, that were lighted up in it at once, answer'd all the Ends of a *Pharos*, or Watch-Tower, both to Land and Sea. By the Advantage of its Situation, it could not fail of being an excellent Light-House both to the *Mediterranean*, and *Red Sea*, and was probably so contriv'd, as to illuminate a great Part of the City likewise, and in that Respect, was not only a glorious Ornament, but of excellent Use. The *House of the Mighty* was a Palace, erected by *David*, in Honour of his *Worthies*, or Chieftains in War, in which they had Apartments, according to their Reputation and Merit in Arms, were always ready at Hand, for Counsel or Aid, as the King's Affairs requir'd, and at leisure Hours, by superintending and instructing the Youth in their Military Exercises, answer'd all the Purposes of a *Royal Academy*, for the Science of War. The History of the Life of King *David*, Vol. II.

(g) 2 Kings xii. 20.

(b) 2 Chron. xxxii. 5.

(i) 1 Kings ix. 15.

(k) 2 Kings xii. 20.



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IN the Reign of *Hezekiah*, when *Sennacherib* came against *Jerusalem* with a Purpose to besiege it, the King took Counsel with his Princes, and, among other Things, that were thought proper for his Defence, 'tis said, (1) *that he built up all the Wall that was fallen, and repaired Millo, and made Darts and Shields in Abundance*. From whence we may infer, that this *Millo* was a Place of great Consequence to the Strength of *Jerusalem*, and was very probably, made to serve two Purposes, i. e. to be both a *Parliament-House*, and an *Arsenal*.

THE Palace, which *David* built for himself, (to which was adjoin'd that which his Son built for the King of *Egypt's* Daughter) must needs have been a very magnificent Structure, since he had both his (m) Workmen and Materials sent him † from *Tyre*, which, at that Time, surpass'd all other Nations in the Art of Building: But of this, we can give no other Account, than that it stood westward from the Temple, and consisted of a large square Court, defended by Flankers, from one of which was the Descent by Stairs into the Gardens, which, in all Probability, were water'd by the Fountain of *Siloam*.

Its Fountains.

THIS Fountain of *Siloam* rises just under the Walls of *Jerusalem*, on the east Side thereof, between the City and the Brook *Kidron*; and in all Probability was the same with the Fountain *Enrogel*, or the *Fuller's Fountain*, whereof we find Mention (n) in *Joshua*, and in the Books of *Samuel*, and the *Kings*. Some Travelers will have it, that the Water of this Fountain is *brackish*, and has not a good Taste; but the Prophet *Isaiah*, when he utters the Complaint of God against the *Jews*, (o) *forasmuch as this People refuseth the Waters of Shiloah, which go softly, &c.* seems to denote the contrary. However

this be, St *Jerom* himself affirms, that the Waters of this Fountain made the Valley, through which they ran, (as watering the Gardens and Plantations that were there) very pleasant and delightful.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

THE Fountain of *Gibon*, which springs very probably from an adjacent Hill of the same Name, was on the west Side of *Jerusalem*; and as King *Hezekiah* (p) order'd the upper Channel of this Fountain to be convey'd into *Jerusalem*, that when the City was besieg'd, the Enemy might not have the Benefit of its Waters; so we need not doubt, but (q) that that other Spring of *Siloam* was, in like Manner, convey'd into the City, and that, for the Convenience of its Inhabitants, they were both, in several Places, distributed (r) into Pools; tho' some make that of *Siloam* to be without the Walls.

THE Brook *Kidron* runs in the Valley of *Jehosaphat*, on the East of *Jerusalem*, between the City, and the Mount of *Olives*. It has usually no great Quantity of Water in it, and is frequently quite dry; but, upon any sudden Rains, it swells exceedingly, and runs with great Impetuosity. It was indeed of singular Service to the antient City, as it receiv'd its Common-Sewers, and, upon every such violent Flood, empty'd them into the *Dead-Sea*.

THE Mount of *Olives*, which doubt- less had its Name from the great Quantity of *Olive-Trees* that grew there, was situated to the East of *Jerusalem*, and parted from the City only by the Valley of *Jehosaphat*, and the Brook *Kidron*; for which Reason, it is said to be a *Sabbath-Day's Journey*, i. e. about a Mile from it. It was on this Mountain, that *Solomon* built Temples to the Gods of the *Ammonites*, and of the *Moabites*, in Complaisance to his Wives, who were Natives of these Nations;

Its Mountains.

(1) 2 Chron. xxxii. 5.

(m) 1 Chron. xiv. 1.

† This must be understood of the *Old Tyre*, which was situate upon the Continent, and where the Temple of *Hercules* stood, of whose Antiquity *Herodotus* talks so much; and not of the *New Tyre*, which stood upon a neighbouring Island, but was not built until the Days of *Solomon*. *Cabnet's Dictionary*, under the Word.

(n) Josh. xv. 7. 2 Sam. xvii. 17. and 1 Kings i. 9.

(o) Isaiah viii. 6.

(p) 2 Chron. xxxii. 30.

(q) *Lam.* Introduction, lib. i. c. 3.

(r) John ix. 7.



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Nations; and for this Reason it is likewise called in Scripture, (s) the *Mount of Corruption*, because such as follow vain Idols, are frequently said in Scripture to *corrupt themselves*. (t) Some indeed have imagin'd, that this *Mount of Corruption* was a distinct Place, but the Matter of Fact is, that *Mount Olivet* had three *Summits*, or was made up of three several Mountains, rang'd one after another, from *North* to *South*. The Middle *Summit* was that, from which our Lord *ascended*; towards the *South* was that, whereon *Solomon* (u) *set up his Abominations*; and towards the *North* was the highest of all, (x) which was commonly called *Galilee*.

*MOUNT Calvary*, which, in all Appearance, had its Name \* from the Similitude it bore to the Figure of a Skull, or Man's Head, was to the *West* of the ancient *Jerusalem*, just without the Gates: And, as our Saviour suffer'd there, we may presume it was the common Place, where Criminals of all Kinds were generally executed.

Its Vallies.

THE *Valley of Hinnon*, or of the *Sons of Hinnon*, lay to the *South* of the City, and was remarkable for the cruel and barbarous Worship of *Moloch*, where Parents made *their Children pass thro' the Fire*, or be *burnt in the Fire*, by Way of Sacrifice to that Idol; and where it was usual to have musical Instruments (from whence it obtain'd likewise the Name of *Tophet*, the Hebrew Word *Toph* signifying the same as *Tympanum* in *Latin*, and *Timbrel* in *English*) to drown the lamentable Shrieks of the Children thus sacrific'd. In this Place there was afterwards kept a perpetual Fire, to consume the dead Carcasses and Excre-

ments, which were brought from *Jerusalem*; and therefore our Saviour, alluding to this, calls *Hell* by the Name of *Ge-henna*, or the *Valley of Hinnon*.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

THE *Valley of Jehosaphat*, which is likewise called the *Valley of Kidron*, because of the above-mention'd Brook which runs through it, lies on the *East* of *Jerusalem*, between the City, and the *Mount of Olives*. Our Saviour indeed ascended from this Mount; but the Notion is very extravagant, that, when he returns again, he will judge the World in this Valley, merely because the Prophet *Joel* hath said, (y) *I will gather all Nations, and will bring them into the Valley of Jehosaphat, and will plead with them for my People*; for, what is there called the *Valley of Jehosaphat*, is not a proper, but an appellative Name, and denotes no more, than the *Judgment of God*.

THERE is another Valley, that the Scripture makes early Mention of, and that is, (z) the *Valley of Shaveb*, which is likewise called the *King's Dale*, where *Melchizedeck* met *Abraham*, in his Return from the Slaughter of *Chederlaomer*. According to *Josephus*, it was, in his Time but about two Furlongs distant from *Jerusalem*, and for this Reason perhaps, it has been thought by some, to be no other, than the Valley of *Jehosaphat*; tho' others make it different, yet so, as to come up near to the said Valley, and to lie on the *South-East* Part of the City, not far from the King's Gardens. (a) Why it obtain'd the Name of the *King's Dale*, whether it was from its near Situation to the King's Palace and Gardens, or from its being the Place, where the Kings were wont to exercise themselves,

or,

(s) 2 Kings xxiii. 13.

(t) *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*.

(u) 2 Kings xxiii. 13.

(x) Vide *Reland's Palest.*

\* Some formerly have been of Opinion, that this Mount was called *Calvary*, because the Head of the first Man in the World was bury'd there, and that our Saviour was crucify'd in the same Place; that his Blood, running down upon the Body of this Person, might restore him to Life, and procure him the Favour of a Resurrection. To support this Tradition, they tell us, that *Noah*, having preserv'd *Adam's* Body in the Ark, distributed the several Parts of it to his Children, and, as a particular Favour, gave the Skull, or Head, to *Shem*, who was to be the Parent of that holy Stock, from whom the *Messias* was to come; and that *Shem*, with a Spirit of Foresight, bury'd the Skull in *Calvary*, where he knew the *Messias* would be crucify'd. But neither the ancient Fathers, nor any modern Authors, that mention this Tradition, were ever persuaded of its Truth; and (without any Disrespect to them) we may look upon all this as mere Fiction. *Cabnet's Dictionary*, under the Word *Calvary*.

(y) Joel iii. 2.

(z) Gen. xiv. 17, 18.

(a) *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, Vol. III.



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or, at least, to entertain themselves with seeing others perform their Exercises of Running, Riding, and the like, is not agreed, and very likely will never be determin'd.

In Gates.

THERE were several Gates belonging to the antient *Jerusalem*, that are mention'd in Scripture, but it is no easy Matter to discover where their particular Situation was. There is Reason to believe likewise, that their Names have been vary'd, or that one and the same Gate has gone under different Appellations; and, as there were several *Circuits* of Walls in the City, which had their respective Gates, it is more than probable, that some of these Gates did not lead out of the City into the Country. *The Gate of the Valley*, which doubtless had its Name from leading into some Valley, (and, \* as Travellers will have it) to the Valley of *Jehosaphat*, was situate on the *East* Side of the City.

THE *Dung-gate*, which seems to have taken its Name from the *Dung* and Filth of the Beasts, that were sacrific'd at the Temple, being carried out of it, was probably the same with what is now so called, and stands on the *East* Side of the City likewise.

THE *Water-gate*, which took its Name from its Use, because thro' it was the Water brought to serve the City and the Temple, was (b) on the same Side; and so was

THE *Gate of the Fountain*, (so called from its Nearness to the Fountain of *Siloam*) only inclining a little towards the *South*.

THE *Gate of Ephraim*, which open'd to the main Road, leading to the Tribe of *Ephraim*, and from it deriv'd its Name, stood on the *North* Side of the City, be-

cause on that Side was that Tribe seated; (c) tho' others had rather place it on the *West*. From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

THE *Horse-gate*, *Sheep-gate*, and *Fish-gate* are suppos'd by some to have had their Denominations from the several Markets of these Creatures, that were kept there. The *Horse* and *Sheep-gates* were both on the *East* Side, not far from the Palace and the Temple; and the *Fish-gate* was on the *North*, tho' some, who think it had its Name from the *Fish* that were brought from the *Mediterranean-Sea*, had rather place it on the *West* Side.

LASTLY, *The High-gate*, or *the Gate of Benjamin*, so called from its Situation towards the Land or Tribe of *Benjamin*, is suppos'd by some to have been the principal Gate of the Royal Palace; but from what we read, (d) concerning *Jeremiah's* being grossly abus'd near this Gate, it appears to have been situated by *the House of the Lord*.

THUS we have pass'd through most of the Gates of this antient City; and on the *North* Side of it, (without the Walls now, but then probably within them) we meet with some *subterraneous* Chambers, that are wonderfully magnificent, and at present, called the *Se-pulchres of the Kings*, (e) of which some late Travellers give us a Description to this Effect: — “ When you “ come to the Place, you pass through “ an Entry, hew'd out of a Rock, “ which admits you into an open Court “ about twenty six Feet square, all cut “ out of the Rock, which is of solid “ Marble, and serves instead of Walls. “ On the Left-Hand of this Court is a “ Portico nine Paces long, and four broad, “ (with

Its royal Sepulchres.

\* Our Countryman, Mr *Sandys*, is of Opinion, that the *Gate of the Valley*, was formerly the same with what is now called *St Stephen's Gate*, not far from the *Golden Gate*, or great Gate, which leads into that, which was formerly the *Court of the Temple*. He likewise supposes, that this Gate of *St Stephen's* was formerly called the *Sheep-Gate*; but into this Opinion perhaps he might be led by the Nearness of *St Stephen's Gate* to the Pool of *Bethesda*, where the Sacrifices were wash'd, before they were brought to the Priest to be offer'd: And therefore, since the *Valley-Gate*, and the *Sheep-Gates* are distinctly mention'd by *Nehemiah*, we cannot but think, that they must have been different Gates. *Well's Geography of the Old Testament*, Vol. III.

(b) *Nehem.* iii. 26.

(c) *Explication du nouveau Plan de l'ancienne Jerusalem*, par M. *Calmet*.

(d) *Jer.* xx. 2.

(e) *Vid. Thevenot's Voyages*, Part I. lib. ii. c. 4. and *Maunderell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*.



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“ (with a Kind of *Architrave* running  
“ round its Front) cut out of the same  
“ Rock, as are likewise the Pillars that  
“ support it. At the End of this *Portico*  
“ there is a Passage into the Sepulchres,  
“ which (when you have crept through  
“ it with some Difficulty) lets you into a  
“ large Chamber of above four and twenty  
“ Feet square. Its *Sides* and *Ceiling*  
“ are so exactly square, and its *Angles*  
“ so just, that no *Architect*, with *Le-*  
“ *vels* and *Plummet*s, could build a Room  
“ more regular. From this Room you  
“ pass into six more, one within ano-  
“ ther, and all of the same Fabrick with  
“ the first, except that the two innermost  
“ are deeper than the rest, and have a  
“ Descent of about six or seven Steps into  
“ them. In every one of these Rooms  
“ (except the first) were *Coffins* of Stone,  
“ plac’d in *Niches*, along the Sides of  
“ the Room, and amount in all to about  
“ fifty.”

THIS perhaps is the only real Work  
that now remains of the *Old Jerusalem*;  
and, what makes it justly look’d upon  
as a Wonder, is, that the Ceiling, the  
Doors, as well as all the rest, their Hin-  
ges, their Posts, their Frames, &c. are all  
cut out of the same continu’d Rock.  
It may therefore be worth our enquiring  
a little in what Manner these Structures  
were employ’d, and who possibly might  
be the Persons, that were repositied in  
them.

And who were  
bury’d in them.

THAT these *subterraneous* Structures  
were not the Sepulchres of the Kings of  
*Judah*, the Generality of those that have  
inspected them are agreed, because the

Scripture tells us, that *David*, and *Solo-*  
*mon*, and most of their Successors were  
(f) buried in the City of *David*; and yet  
these *Grots* lie without the Gate of *Da-*  
*mascus* (as it is now called) at a conside-  
rable Distance from the City of *David*:  
But how far this City of *David* did for-  
merly extend, or where we shall find any  
other Signs of \* the Places, where *Da-*  
*vid*, and the other Kings his Successors  
were buried, we have no hints given us.  
The Reverend Mr *Maundrell*, from this  
Passage in Scripture, (g) and *Hezekiah*,  
*slept with his Fathers, and they buried him*  
*in the chiefest of the Sepulchres of the Sons*  
*of David*, is of Opinion, that this was  
the Place, where *Hezekiah*, and the Sons  
immediately born to *David*, that were  
not repositied in the *Royal* Sepulchres,  
were buried: But it is much more pro-  
bable (and what both the *Syriack* and  
*Arabick* Versions seem to confirm) that,  
by the Sons of *David* here, we are not to  
understand his immediate Sons, properly so  
called, but the Kings rather, that suc-  
ceeded him. This is a Form of Speech  
frequently made use of by the sacred  
Writers: And therefore the Sense of  
*Hezekiah’s being buried in the Sepulchres of*  
*the Sons of David*, must be, that he was  
buried in the Sepulchres of the Kings de-  
scended from *David*.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

THE more probable Opinion, there-  
fore, is that of *Le Bruyn*, who supposes,  
that these *Grots* were the Sepulchres of  
*Manasseh*, his Son *Amon*, and his Grand-  
son *Josiah*, Kings of *Judah*. Of *Ma-*  
*nasseh* the Scripture tells us expressly, that  
(h) he was buried in the Garden of his  
own

(f) 1 Kings ii. 10. and xi. 43.

\* *Benjamin of Tudela*, who wrote about the Year 1173, relates, that not above fifteen Years before, a Wall, be-  
longing to Mount *Sion*, fell down, and the Priests set twenty Men to work upon it. Two of these Workmen, being  
one Day left alone, took up a Stone, which open’d a Passage into a *subterraneous* Place, into which they enter’d.  
There they found a Palace, supported by Marble Pillars, and crusted over with Gold and Silver. At the Entrance  
was a Table, and upon this Table a Golden Crown and Sceptre. This, say the Jews, was *David’s* Monument, and  
opposite to it was *Solomon’s*, adorn’d in the like Manner. As they were attempting to penetrate farther, they were  
overfet by a *Whirlwind*, and remain’d senseless till the Evening, when they heard a Voice, bidding them arise, and  
begone. *Benjamin* assures us, that he had this Story from the Mouth of one *Abraham*, a *Pharisee*, who, as he said,  
had been consulted about this Event by the *Patriarch* of *Jerusalem*, and declar’d, that this was *David’s* Monument.  
But the whole of this Account has so much the Air of a Fable, that it is needless to confute it. *Calmet’s* Dictionary,  
under the Word *David*.

(g) 2 Chron. xxxii. 33.

(h) 2 Kings xxi. 18, 26.



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own House, in the Garden of Uzza; and of Amon it is said, that he was buried in the Garden of Uzza, which Garden Manasseh might, very probably, purchase, and, being taken with the Pleasantness of it, might there build him an House, which is here called his own House, in Contradistinction to the royal Palace, which was built and inhabited by his Ancestors on Mount Zion. Of Josiah indeed the sacred History does not say expressly, that he was buried here; all that it tells us is, that he (i) was buried in the Sepulchres of his Fathers, but whether in the City of David, or in the Garden of Uzza, it makes no Mention: And therefore, since both his Father and Grandfather were buried in this Garden, there is Reason to think, that Josiah was here buried likewise; especially considering, that, in one of these subterraneous Rooms, (as Le Bruyn tells us) which seem'd to be more lofty than the rest, there were three Coffins curiously adorn'd with carv'd Works, which he took to be the Coffins of these three Kings.

Its Temple.

BUT of all the Buildings, that antient Jerusalem had to boast of, the Temple, which David design'd, and Solomon perfected, was the most magnificent. We are not however to imagine, that this Temple was built like one of our Churches; for it did not consist of one single Edifice, but † of several Courts and Buildings, which took up a great deal of Ground. The Place whereon it was erected, was the Top of Mount Moriah, and the Building all together made an exact Square of eight hundred Cubits, or one thousand four hundred and sixty Feet long on each Side, exactly fronting the East, West, North, and South.

(k) To make this Building more firm

and secure, it was found necessary to begin the Foundation at the Bottom of the Mount; so that the Sides were three hundred and thirty-three Cubits, or about six hundred and eight Feet high, before they were rais'd to the Level of the Temple; and this afforded a most noble Prospect towards the chief Part of the City, which lay Westward. It is impossible to compute the Labour of laying this Foundation, because it is impossible to tell how much of the Mountain must in some Places be remov'd, and in others filled up, to bring it to an exact Square for so great a Height: But when we consider, that there were 180,000 Workmen, for seven Years and an Half, constantly employ'd, we cannot but admire what Business could be found for so many Hands to do; and yet, when we reflect on the Vastness of this Fabrick, it would make one no less wonder, how, in so short a Time, it could possibly be compleated. “ For the Foundation (as Josephus tells us) was laid prodigiously deep, and the Stones were not only of the largest Size, but hard and firm enough to endure all Weathers, and be Proof against the Worm. Besides this, they were so mortis'd into one another, and so wedg'd into the Rock, that the Strength and Curiosity of the Basis was not less admirable, than the intended Superstructure, and the one was every Way answerable to the other.”

THE Ground-Plot, upon which the Temple was built, was a Square of six hundred Cubits every Way. It was encompass'd with a Wall of six Cubits high, and the same in Breadth, and contain'd several Buildings for different Uses, surrounded with Cloysters supported by Marble Pillars. Within this Space was the Court of the Gentiles fifty Cubits wide, and

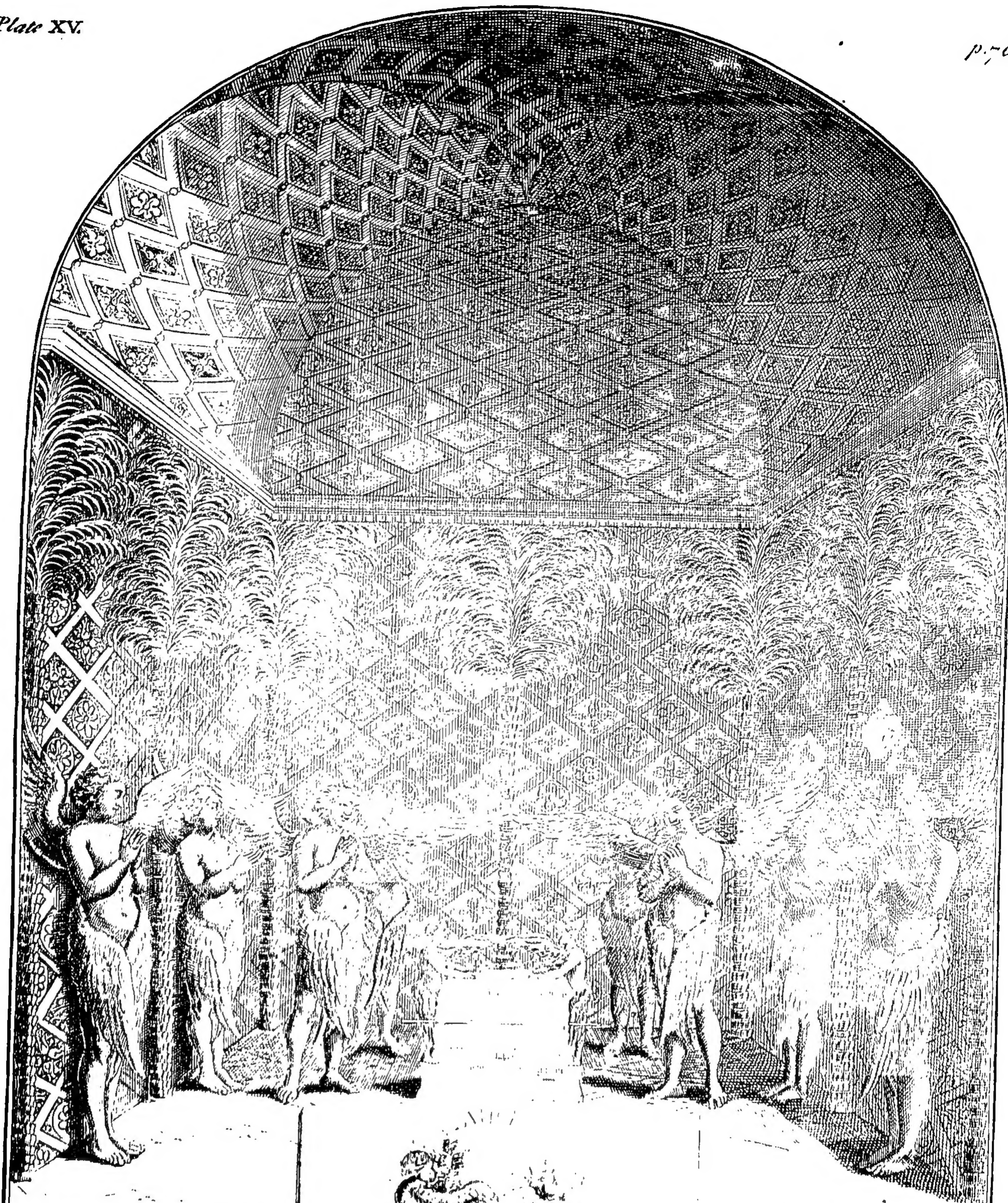
From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
viii.

(i) 2 Chron. xxxv. 24.

† These several Parts of the Temple, the Greeks are very careful to distinguish by different Names. What was properly the Temple, they called ἡ ναὸς; and the Courts, and other Parts of the Temple, τὰ ἱερά. Thus when Zacharias is said to have gone into the Temple to burn Incense, Luke i. 9. (which was done in the Sanctum) the Word is ναὸς; but when it is said, that Anna the Prophetess departed not from the Temple, Luke ii. 37. (i. e. liv'd in that Part of the Court of the Israelites, which was appropriated to religious Women) the Greek Word is ἱερά. And this Observation holds good all through the New Testament. Lamy, de Tabern. lib. v. c. 5.

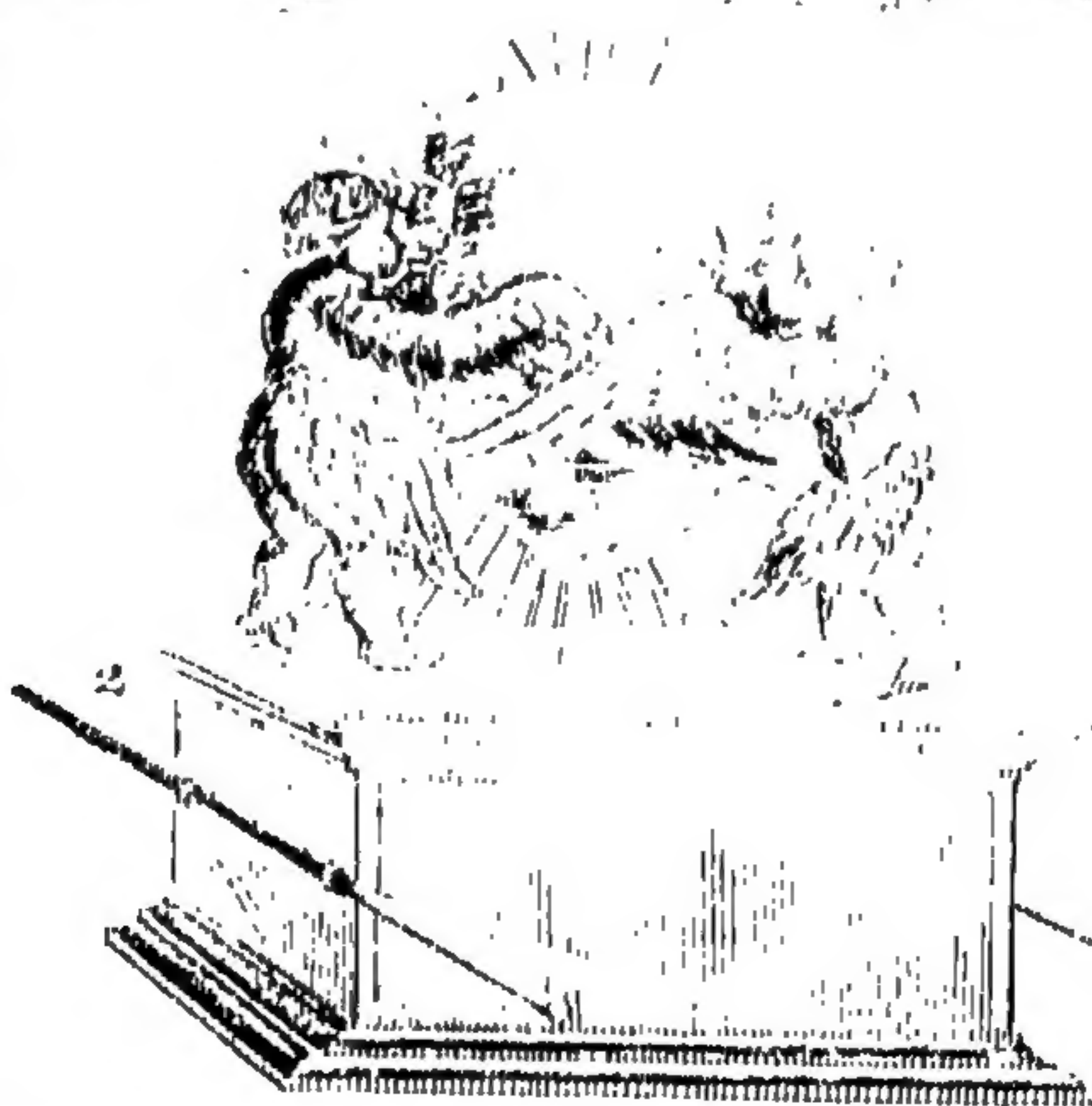
(k) Bedford's Chronology, lib. iv. c. 5.





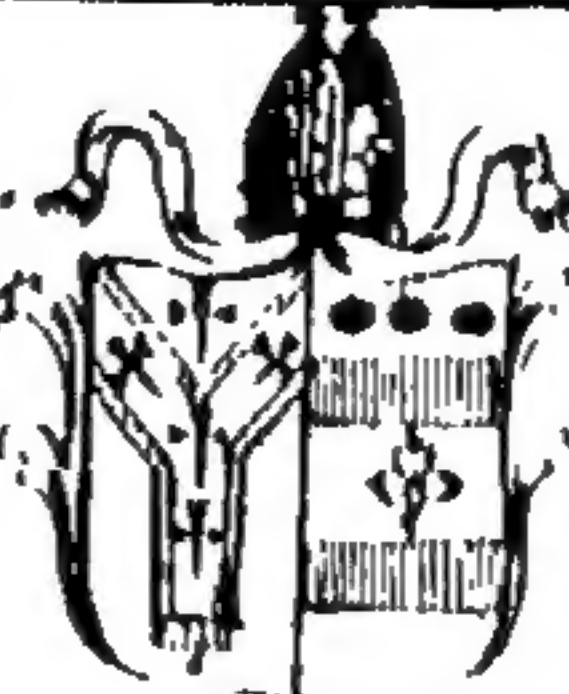
THE HOLY OF HOLIES, IN

<sup>2</sup>  
The Ark of *q* Covenant shewing  
*q* bars on *q* sides [1 K. viii. 8]. The  
Cherubims above on *q* covenant  
each with two wings without  
hands, and a cloud above



THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON.

between *q* Cherubims, which seems  
to shine, and to be, as it were, em-  
braced by the wings of the  
Cherubims. according to  
Schaceus, & others.

To the most Rev.<sup>d</sup> Father in God.  WILLIAM Lord, Archbishop of  
CANTERBURY, this Plate is most  
most dutifull. Son & Servant. humbly Inscribed, by his Lordsh.  
Tho: Stuckhouse



A. M.  
2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

and adorn'd, in like Manner, with Cloysters and Pillars. To separate this Court from the Court of the Israelites, there was a Wall of five hundred Cubits square. The Court of the Israelites was an hundred Cubits. It was pav'd with Marble of different Colours, and had four Gates, to every Quarter one, and each rising with an Ascent of seven Steps. To separate this Court from the Court of the Priests, there was a Wall of two hundred Cubits square; and the Priests Court was an hundred Cubits, encompass'd with Cloysters, and Apartments, where the Priests, that attended the Service of the Temple, were us'd to live. This Court had but three Gates, to the East, to the North, and to the South, and were approach'd by an Ascent of eight Steps. These Courts were all open, and without any Covering, but, in case of Rain, or other bad Weather, the People could retire under the Cloysters, that were supported with Rows of Pillars, and went round every Court. In the Israelites Court, over-against the Gate of the Priests Court, was erected a Throne for the King, (which was a magnificent Alcove) where he seated himself when he came to the Temple. In the Priests Court was the Altar of Burnt-Offerings, a great deal larger than that of the Tabernacle, having ten brazen Lavers, whereas the Tabernacle had but one, and a Sea of Brass (which the Tabernacle had not) supported by twelve Oxen.

ON the West Side of the Altar of Burnt-Offerings, there was an Ascent of twelve Steps to what we may properly call the Temple; and this consisted of three Parts, the Porch, the Sanctuary, and the Holy of Holies. The Porch was about twelve

Cubits long, and twenty broad, at the Entrance of which stood the two famous Pillars Jachan and Boaz, whose Names import, that God alone was the Support of the Temple; and its Gate was fourteen Cubits wide. The Sanctuary, or Nave of the Temple, was forty Cubits long, and twenty broad, wherein were the Altar of Incense, and the Table of Shew-Bread; but because the Temple was larger, and wanted more Light than the Tabernacle, instead of one, it had ten golden Candlesticks. The Holy of Holies was a Square of twenty Cubits, wherein was plac'd the Ark of the Covenant, containing the two Tables of Stone, wherein God had engraven his ten Commandments, but instead of two Cherubims (as were in the Tabernacle) in the Temple there were four.

ROUND about the Temple, and against the Walls thereof (as Josephus tells us) were built thirty Cells, or little Houses, which serv'd in the Way of so many Buttresses, and were, at the same Time, no small Ornament to it; for there were Stories of these Cells one above another, whereof the second was narrower than the first, and the third than the second, so that their Roofs and Balustrades, being within each other, made three different Terrasses (as it were) † upon which one might walk round the Temple. Within, these little Houses were ceiled with Cedar, their Walls were wainscoted with the same, and embellish'd with Carving, and Fretwork, overlaid with Gold, which, with their dazzling Splendor, made every Thing about them look glorious.

UPON the Whole then, we may observe, (1) that the Glory of this Temple did

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 Kings  
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† The Temple itself, strictly so called, had two Stories, the upper of which was rais'd quite above these little Houses, and their Roofs; for their Roofs reach'd no higher than the Top of the first Story. The second Story, which had no Building adjoining to its Side, made a large Room over the Sanctuary, and the Holy of Holies, of equal Dimensions with them; and 'tis no improbable Opinion, that this was the upper Chamber, in which the Holy Ghost was pleas'd to descend upon the Apostles in a visible Manner. This upper Room was appropriated to the pious Laity, as a Place for them to come and pay their Devotions in; and therefore it seems very likely, that the Apostles were here with other devout Persons, while the Temple was full of Jews of all Nations, who were come to celebrate the Feast of the Pentecost, and that thereupon they below, hearing the Noise, which was occasion'd by the Shaking of the Place, ran up to see the Cause of it, and, to their great Surprise, found the Apostles distinguish'd from the other Jews about them, both by the cloven Tongues, which sat upon each of them, and by the several different Languages, that they spake. Lamy's Introduction, lib. i. c. 4.

(1) Pridaux's Connection, Part I. lib. iii.



A. M.  
2981, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1023, &c.

did not consist in the Bulk or Largeness of it, (for in itself it was but a small Pile of Building, no more than an hundred and fifty Feet in Length, and an hundred and five in Breadth, taking the Whole of it together from Out to Out, and is exceeded by many of our *Parish Churches*) but its chief Grandeur and Excellency lay in its Out-Buildings and Ornaments, in its Workmanship, which was every where very curious, and its Overlayings, which were vast and prodigious; for the Overlaying of the *Holy of Holies* only (which was a Room but thirty Feet square, and twenty high) amounted to six hundred Talents of Gold, which comes to four Millions three hundred and twenty Thousand Pounds of our *Sterling Money*.

To conclude this Dissertation then, (m) in the Words of the *Jewish Historian*, "The whole Frame, in fine, says he,

" was rais'd upon Stones; polish'd to the  
" highest Degree of Perfection, and so  
" artificially put together, that there was  
" no Joint to be discern'd, no Sign of  
" any working Tools being upon them,  
" but the whole look'd liker the Work  
" of Providence, and Nature, than the  
" Product of Art, and human Invention.  
" And as for the Inside, whatever Carv-  
" ing, Gilding, Embroidery, rich Silks,  
" and fine Linnen could do, of these  
" there was the greatest Profusion. The  
" very Floor of the Temple was overlaid  
" with beaten Gold, the Doors were  
" large, and proportion'd to the Height  
" of the Walls, twenty Cubits broad,  
" and still Gold upon Gold." In a Word,  
it was Gold all over, and \* nothing was  
wanting, either within or without, that  
might contribute to the Glory, and Mag-  
nificence of the Work.

From 2 Sam.  
xix. to 1 King  
viii.

(m) *Jewish Antiq.* lib. viii. c. 2.

\* It is not to be doubted, but that *Solomon* made all the Utensils and Ornaments of the Temple proportionable, both in Number and Richness, to that of the Edifice; and yet *Josephus* seems to have carry'd his Account beyond all Credibility, when he tells us, that there were 10,000 Tables, besides those of the Shew-Bread; 10,000 Candlesticks, besides those in the holy Place; 80,000 Cups for Drink-Offerings; 100,000 Basins of Gold, and double that Number of Silver: When he tells us, that *Solomon* caus'd to be made 1000 Ornaments for the sole Use of the High-Priest; 10,000 Linnen Robes and Girdles, for that of the common Priests; and 200,000 more for the *Levites* and Musicians: When he tells of 200,000 Trumpets, made according to *Solomon's* Direction, with 200,000 more, made in the Fashion, that *Moses* had appointed, and 400,000 musical Instruments of a mixt Metal, between Gold and Silver, called by the Ancients *Electrum*. Concerning all which, we can only say, that the Text is either silent, or contradicts this prodigious Account. *Universal History*, Lib. i. c. 7.

The End of the Fifth Book.

